This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

A 3 9015 00390 129 8
University of Michigan – BUHR

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
LIBRARIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
ARTES SCIENTIA VERITAS
1817

ESSAYS

ON THE

POWERS

OF THE HUMAN MIND.

BY

THOMAS REID, D. D. F. R. S. EDIN.
PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF THE AUTHOR.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR
BELL & BRADFUTE.
SOLD BY G. AND J. ROBINSON, LONDON.

1803.

B
1533
.E5
v.3

EDINBURGH,
Printed by A. NEILL & Co.

gt
Lib. of Dean C.S. Yoakum
10-4-48
V.3

ESSAYS

ON THE

ACTIVE POWERS OF MAN.

He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good. MICAH.

8-10-50 Cur

CONTENTS

OF

VOLUME THIRD.

Page

INTRODUCTION, - - - 1

ESSAY I. OF ACTIVE POWER IN GENERAL.

CHAP. 1. *Of the Notion of Active Power,* - 5
—— 2. *The same Subject,* - - 16
—— 3. *Of Mr* LOCKE's *Account of our Idea of Power,* - - 28
—— 4. *Of Mr* HUME's *Opinion of the Idea of Power,* - - 32
—— 5. *Whether Beings that have no Will nor Understanding may have active Power?* 41
—— 6. *Of the efficient Causes of the Phenomena of Nature,* - - 51
—— 7. *Of the Extent of Human Power,* - 60

ESSAY

ESSAY II. OF THE WILL.

Page

CHAP. 1. *Observations concerning the Will,* 73
—— 2. *Of the Influence of Incitements and Motives upon the Will,* - - 82
—— 3. *Of Operations of Mind which may be called Voluntary,* - - 96
—— 4. *Corollaries,* - - 114

ESSAY III. OF THE PRINCIPLES OF ACTION.

PART I. *Of the Mechanical Principles of Action.*

CHAP. 1. *Of the Principles of Action in general,* 119
—— 2. *Of Instinct,* - - 126
—— 3. *Of Habit,* - - - 144

ESSAY III. PART II.

Of Animal Principles of Action.

CHAP. 1. *Of Appetites,* - - 148
—— 2. *Of Desires,* - - 161
—— 3. *Of Benevolent Affection in general,* 173
—— 4. *Of the particular Benevolent Affections,* 182
—— 5. *Of Malevolent Affection,* - 205
—— 6. *Of Passion,* - - 221
—— 7. *Of Disposition,* - - 236
—— 8. *Of Opinion,* - - 243

ESSAY

ESSAY III. PART III.

Of the Rational Principles of Action.

		Page
CHAP. 1.	*There are Rational Principles of Action in Man,*	251
—— 2.	*Of Regard to our Good on the Whole,*	255
—— 3.	*The Tendency of this Principle,*	263
—— 4.	*Defects of this Principle,*	270
—— 5.	*Of the Notion of Duty, Rectitude, Moral Obligation,*	277
—— 6.	*Of the Sense of Duty,*	289
—— 7.	*Of Moral Approbation and Disapprobation,*	298
—— 8.	*Observations concerning Conscience,*	308

ESSAY IV. OF THE LIBERTY OF MORAL AGENTS.

CHAP. 1.	*The Notions of Moral Liberty and Necessity stated,*	326
—— 2.	*Of the Words Cause and Effect, Action, and Active Power,*	336
—— 3.	*Causes of the Ambiguity of those Words,*	343
—— 4.	*Of the Influence of Motives,*	356
—— 5.	*Liberty consistent with Government,*	370
—— 6.	*First Argument for Liberty,*	383

Page

CHAP. 7. *Second Argument,* - - 396
——— 8. *Third Argument,* - - 403
——— 9. *Of Arguments for Neceſſity,* - 409
——— 10. *The ſame Subject,* - - 425
——— 11. *Of the Permiſſion of Evil,* - - 436

ESSAY V. OF MORALS.

CHAP. 1. *Of the Firſt Principles of Morals,* - 454
——— 2. *Of Syſtems of Morals,* - - 468
——— 3. *Of Syſtems of Natural Juriſprudence,* 477
——— 4. *Whether an Action deſerving Moral Approbation, muſt be done with the Belief of its being morally good,* - 487
——— 5. *Whether Juſtice be a Natural or an Artificial Virtue,* - - 506
——— 6. *Of the Nature and Obligation of a Contract,* - - 552
——— 7. *That Moral Approbation implies a real Judgment,* - 580

ESSAYS

ESSAYS

ON THE

ACTIVE POWERS OF THE HUMAN MIND.

INTRODUCTION.

THE diviſion of the faculties of the human mind into *Underſtanding* and *Will* is very ancient, and has been very generally adopted; the former comprehending all our ſpeculative, the latter all our active Powers.

It is evidently the intention of our Maker, that man ſhould be an active and not merely a ſpeculative being. For this purpoſe, certain active powers have been given him, limited indeed in many reſpects, but ſuited to his rank and place in the creation.

Our buſineſs is to manage theſe powers, by propoſing to ourſelves the beſt ends, planning the moſt proper ſyſtem of conduct that is in our power, and executing it with induſtry and zeal. This is true wiſdom; this is the very intention of our being.

Every thing virtuous and praiſe-worthy muſt lie in the right uſe of our power; every thing vicious and blameable in the abuſe of it. What is not within the ſphere of our power cannot be imputed to us either for blame or praiſe. Theſe are ſelf-evident truths, to which every unprejudiced mind yields an immediate and invincible aſſent.

Knowledge derives its value from this, that it enlarges our power, and directs us in the application of it. For in the right employment of our active power conſiſts all the honour, dignity and worth of a man, and, in the abuſe and perverſion of it, all vice, corruption and depravity.

We are diſtinguiſhed from the brute animals, not leſs by our active than by our ſpeculative powers.

The brutes are ſtimulated to various actions by their inſtincts, by their appetites, by their paſſions. But they ſeem to be neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt impulſe, without any capacity of ſelf-government. Therefore we do not blame them for what they do; nor have we any reaſon to think that they blame themſelves. They may be trained up by diſcipline, but cannot be governed by law. There is no evidence that they have the conception of a law, or of its obligation.

Man is capable of acting from motives of a higher nature. He perceives a dignity and worth in one courſe of conduct, a demerit and turpitude

tude in another, which brutes have not the capacity to diſcern.

He perceives it to be his duty to act the worthy and the honourable part, whether his appetites and paſſions incite him to it, or to the contrary. When he ſacrifices the gratification of the ſtrongeſt appetites or paſſions to duty, this is ſo far from diminiſhing the merit of his conduct, that it greatly increaſes it, and affords, upon reflection, an inward ſatisfaction and triumph, of which brute-animals are not ſuſceptible. When he acts a contrary part, he has a conſciouſneſs of demerit, to which they are no leſs ſtrangers.

Since, therefore, the active powers of man make ſo important a part of his conſtitution, and diſtinguiſh him ſo eminently from his fellow-animals, they deſerve no leſs to be the ſubject of philoſophical diſquiſition than his intellectual powers.

A juſt knowledge of our powers, whether intellectual or active, is ſo far of real importance to us, as it aids us in the exerciſe of them. And every man muſt acknowledge, that to act properly is much more valuable than to think juſtly or reaſon acutely.

ESSAY I.

OF ACTIVE POWER IN GENERAL.

CHAP. I.

Of the Notion of Active Power.

TO conſider gravely what is meant by Active Power, may ſeem altogether unneceſſary, and to be mere trifling. It is not a term of art, but a common word in our language, uſed every day in diſcourſe, even by the vulgar. We find words of the ſame meaning in all other languages; and there is no reaſon to think that it is not perfectly underſtood by all men who underſtand the Engliſh language.

I believe all this is true, and that an attempt to explain a word ſo well underſtood, and to ſhow that it has a meaning, requires an apology.

The apology is, That this term, ſo well underſtood by the vulgar, has been darkened by Philoſophers, who, in this, as in many other inſtances, have found great difficulties about a thing which, to the reſt of mankind, ſeems perfectly clear.

This has been the more eaſily effected, becauſe Power is a thing ſo much of its own kind, and ſo ſimple in its nature, as not to admit of a logical definition.

It is well known, that there are many things perfectly underſtood, and of which we have clear and diſtinct conceptions, which cannot be logically defined. No man ever attempted to define magnitude; yet there is no word whoſe meaning is more diſtinctly or more generally underſtood. We cannot give a logical definition of thought, of duration, of number, or of motion.

When men attempt to define ſuch things, they give no light. They may give a ſynonymous word or phraſe, but it will probably be a worſe for a better. If they will define, the definition will either be grounded upon a hypotheſis, or it will darken the ſubject rather than throw light upon it.

The Ariſtotelian definition of motion, that it is "*Actus entis in potentia, quatenus in potentia,*" has been juſtly cenſured by modern Philoſophers; yet I think it is matched by what a celebrated modern Philoſopher has given us, as the moſt accurate definition of belief, to wit, "That "it is a lively idea related to or aſſociated with "a preſent impreſſion." *Treatiſe of Human Nature, vol.* i. *p.* 172. "Memory," according to the ſame Philoſopher, "is the faculty by which "we repeat our impreſſions, ſo as that they re"tain a conſiderable degree of their firſt viva"city,

"city, and are ſomewhat intermediate betwixt "an idea and an impreſſion."

EUCLID, if his editors have not done him injuſtice, has attempted to define a right line, to define unity, ratio and number. But theſe definitions are good for nothing. We may indeed ſuſpect them not to be EUCLID's; becauſe they are never once quoted in the Elements, and are of no uſe.

I ſhall not therefore attempt to define active power, that I may not be liable to the ſame cenſure; but ſhall offer ſome obſervations that may lead us to attend to the conception we have of it in our own minds.

1. Power is not an object of any of our external ſenſes, nor even an object of conſciouſneſs.

That it is not ſeen, nor heard, nor touched, nor taſted, nor ſmelt, needs no proof. That we are not conſcious of it, in the proper ſenſe of that word, will be no leſs evident, if we reflect, that conſciouſneſs is that power of the mind by which it has an immediate knowledge of its own operations. Power is not an operation of the mind, and therefore no object of conſciouſneſs. Indeed every operation of the mind is the exertion of ſome power of the mind; but we are conſcious of the operation only, the power lies behind the ſcene; and though we may juſtly infer the power from the operation, it muſt be remembered, that inferring is not the province of conſciouſneſs, but of reaſon.

I acknowledge, therefore, that our having any conception or idea of power is repugnant to Mr LOCKE's theory, that all our ſimple ideas are got either by the external ſenſes, or by conſciouſneſs. Both cannot be true. Mr HUME perceived this repugnancy, and conſiſtently maintained, that we have no idea of power. Mr LOCKE did not perceive it. If he had, it might have led him to ſuſpect his theory; for when theory is repugnant to fact, it is eaſy to ſee which ought to yield. I am conſcious that I have a *conception* or *idea* of power, but, ſtrictly ſpeaking, I am not conſcious that I have *power*.

I ſhall have occaſion to ſhew, that we have very early, from our conſtitution, a conviction or belief of ſome degree of active power in ourſelves. This belief, however, is not conſciouſneſs: For we may be deceived in it; but the teſtimony of conſciouſneſs can never deceive. Thus, a man who is ſtruck with a palſy in the night commonly knows not that he has loſt the power of ſpeech till he attempts to ſpeak; he knows not whether he can move his hands and arms till he makes the trial; and if, without making trial, he conſults his conſciouſneſs ever ſo attentively, it will give him no information whether he has loſt theſe powers, or ſtill retains them.

From this we muſt conclude, that the powers we have are not an object of conſciouſneſs, though it would be fooliſh to cenſure this way of ſpeaking

ing in popular diſcourſe, which requires not accurate attention to the different provinces of our various faculties. The teſtimony of conſciouſneſs is always unerring, nor was it ever called in queſtion by the greateſt ſceptics, ancient or modern.

2. A *ſecond* obſervation is, That as there are ſome things of which we have a direct, and others of which we have only a relative conception, power belongs to the latter claſs.

As this diſtinction is overlooked by moſt writers in logic, I ſhall beg leave to illuſtrate it a little, and then ſhall apply it to the preſent ſubject.

Of ſome things we know what they are in themſelves; our conception of ſuch things I call *direct*. Of other things, we know not what they are in themſelves, but only that they have certain properties or attributes, or certain relations to other things; of theſe our conception is only *relative*.

To illuſtrate this by ſome examples: In the univerſity-library, I call for the book, preſs L, ſhelf 10. No. 10.; the library-keeper muſt have ſuch a conception of the book I want, as to be able to diſtinguiſh it from ten thouſand that are under his care. But what conception does he form of it from my words? They inform him neither of the author, nor the ſubject, nor the language, nor the ſize, nor the binding, but only of its mark and place. His conception of it is merely relative to theſe circumſtances; yet this

this relative notion enables him to diſtinguiſh it from every other book in the library.

There are other relative notions that are not taken from accidental relations, as in the example juſt now mentioned, but from qualities or attributes eſſential to the thing.

Of this kind are our notions both of body and mind. What is body? It is, ſay Philoſophers, that which is extended, ſolid and diviſible. Says the queriſt, I do not aſk what the properties of body are, but what is the thing itſelf; let me firſt know directly what body is, and then conſider its properties? To this demand I am afraid the queriſt will meet with no ſatisfactory anſwer; becauſe our notion of body is not direct but relative to its qualities. We know that it is ſomething extended, ſolid and diviſible, and we know no more.

Again, if it ſhould be aſked, What is mind? It is that which thinks. I aſk not what is does, or what its operations are, but what it is? To this I can find no anſwer; our notion of mind being not direct, but relative to its operations, as our notion of body is relative to its qualities.

There are even many of the qualities of body, of which we have only a relative conception. What is heat in a body? It is a quality which affects the ſenſe of touch in a certain way. If you want to know, not how it affects the ſenſe of touch, but what it is in itſelf; this I confeſs I know not. My conception of it is not direct, but

but relative to the effect it has upon bodies. The notions we have of all thoſe qualities which Mr LOCKE calls ſecondary, and of thoſe he calls powers of bodies, ſuch as the power of the magnet to attract iron, or of fire to burn wood, are relative.

Having given examples of things of which our conception is only relative, it may be proper to mention ſome of which it is direct. Of this kind, are all the primary qualities of body; figure, extenſion, ſolidity, hardneſs, fluidity, and the like. Of theſe we have a direct and immediate knowledge from our ſenſes. To this claſs belong alſo all the operations of mind of which we are conſcious. I know what thought is, what memory, what a purpoſe, what a promiſe.

There are ſome things of which we can have both a direct and a relative conception. I can directly conceive ten thouſand men or ten thouſand pounds, becauſe both are objects of ſenſe, and may be ſeen. But whether I ſee ſuch an object, or directly conceive it, my notion of it is indiſtinct; it is only that of a great multitude of men, or of a great heap of money; and a ſmall addition or diminution makes no perceptible change in the notion I form in this way. But I can form a relative notion of the ſame number of men or of pounds, by attending to the relations which this number has to other numbers, greater or leſs. Then I perceive that the relative notion is diſtinct and ſcientific. For the addition

addition of a ſingle man, or a ſingle pound, or even of a penny, is eaſily perceived.

In like manner, I can form a direct notion of a polygon of a thouſand equal ſides and equal angles. This direct notion cannot be more diſtinct, when conceived in the mind, than that which I get by ſight, when the object is before me; and I find it ſo indiſtinct, that it has the ſame appearance to my eye, or to my direct conception, as a polygon of a thouſand and one, or of nine hundred and ninety-nine ſides. But when I form a relative conception of it, by attending to the relation it bears to polygons of a greater or leſs number of ſides, my notion of it becomes diſtinct and ſcientific, and I can demonſtrate the properties by which it is diſtinguiſhed from all other polygons. From theſe inſtances it appears, that our relative conceptions of things are not always leſs diſtinct, nor leſs fit materials for accurate reaſoning, than thoſe that are direct; and that the contrary may happen in a remarkable degree.

Our conception of power is relative to its exertions or effects. Power is one thing; its exertion is another thing. It is true, there can be no exertion without power; but there may be power that is not exerted. Thus a man may have power to ſpeak when he is ſilent; he may have power to riſe and walk when he ſits ſtill.

But, though it be one thing to ſpeak, and another to have the power of ſpeaking, I apprehend

we

we conceive of the power as ſomething which has a certain relation to the effect. And of every power we form our notion by the effect which it is able to produce.

3. It is evident that power is a quality, and cannot exiſt without a ſubject to which it belongs.

That power may exiſt without any being or ſubject to which that power may be attributed, is an abſurdity, ſhocking to every man of common underſtanding.

It is a quality which may be varied, not only in degree, but alſo in kind; and we diſtinguiſh both the kinds and degrees by the effects which they are able to produce.

Thus a power to fly, and a power to reaſon, are different kinds of power, their effects being different in kind. But a power to carry one hundred weight, and a power to carry two hundred, are different degrees of the ſame kind.

4. We cannot conclude the want of power from its not being exerted; nor from the exertion of a leſs degree of power, can we conclude that there is no greater degree in the ſubject. Thus, though a man on a particular occaſion ſaid nothing, we cannot conclude from that circumſtance, that he had not the power of ſpeech; nor from a man's carrying ten pound weight, can we conclude that he had not power to carry twenty.

5. There

5. There are ſome qualities that have a contrary, others that have not; power is a quality of the latter kind.

Vice is contrary to virtue, miſery to happineſs, hatred to love, negation to affirmation; but there is no contrary to power. Weakneſs or impotence are defects or privations of power, but not contraries to it.

If what has been ſaid of power be eaſily underſtood, and readily aſſented to, by all who underſtand our language, as I believe it is, we may from this juſtly conclude, That we have a diſtinct notion of power, and may reaſon about it with underſtanding, though we can give no logical definition of it.

If power were a thing of which we have no idea, as ſome Philoſophers have taken much pains to prove, that is, if power were a word without any meaning, we could neither affirm nor deny any thing concerning it with underſtanding. We ſhould have equal reaſon to ſay that it is a ſubſtance, as that it is a quality; that it does not admit of degrees, as that it does. If the underſtanding immediately aſſents to one of theſe aſſertions, and revolts from the contrary, we may conclude with certainty, that we put ſome meaning upon the word *power*, that is, that we have ſome idea of it. And it is chiefly for the ſake of this concluſion, that I have enumerated ſo many obvious things concerning it.

The

The term active power is uſed, I conceive, to diſtinguiſh it from ſpeculative powers. As all languages diſtinguiſh action from ſpeculation, the ſame diſtinction is applied to the powers by which they are produced. The powers of ſeeing, hearing, remembering, diſtinguiſhing, judging, reaſoning, are ſpeculative powers; the power of executing any work of art or labour is active power.

There are many things related to power, in ſuch a manner, that we can have no notion of them if we have none of power.

The exertion of active power we call *action*; and as every action produces ſome change, ſo every change muſt be cauſed by ſome exertion, or by the ceſſation of ſome exertion of power. That which produces a change by the exertion of its power, we call the *cauſe* of that change; and the change produced, the *effect* of that cauſe.

When one being, by its active power, produces any change upon another, the laſt is ſaid to be *paſſive*, or to be acted upon. Thus we ſee, that action and paſſion, cauſe and effect, exertion and operation, have ſuch a relation to active power, that if it be underſtood, they are underſtood of conſequence; but if power be a word without any meaning, all thoſe words which are related to it, muſt be words without any meaning. They are, however, common words in our language;

language; and equivalent words have always been common in all languages.

It would be very ſtrange indeed, if mankind had always uſed theſe words ſo familiarly, without perceiving that they had no meaning; and that this diſcovery ſhould have been firſt made by a Philoſopher of the preſent age.

With equal reaſon it might be maintained, that though there are words in all languages to expreſs ſight, and words to ſignify the various colours which are objects of ſight; yet that all mankind from the beginning of the world had been blind, and never had an idea of ſight or of colour. But there are no abſurdities ſo groſs as thoſe which Philoſophers have advanced concerning ideas.

CHAP. II.

The ſame Subject.

THERE are, I believe, no abſtract notions, that are to be found more early, or more univerſally, in the minds of men, than thoſe of acting, and being acted upon. Every child that underſtands the diſtinction between ſtriking and being ſtruck, muſt have the conception of action and paſſion.

We find accordingly, that there is no language ſo imperfect, but that it has active and paſſive verbs,

verbs, and participles; the one ſignifying ſome kind of action; the other the being acted upon. This diſtinction enters into the original contexture of all languages.

Active verbs have a form and conſtruction proper to themſelves; paſſive verbs a different form and a different conſtruction. In all languages, the nominative to an active verb is the agent; the thing acted upon is put in an oblique caſe. In paſſive verbs, the thing acted upon is the nominative, and the agent, if expreſſed, muſt be in an oblique caſe; as in this example: *Raphael drew the Cartoons; the Cartoons were drawn by Raphael.*

Every diſtinction which we find in the ſtructure of all languages, muſt have been familiar to thoſe who framed the languages at firſt, and to all who ſpeak them with underſtanding.

It may be objected to this argument, taken from the ſtructure of language, in the uſe of active and paſſive verbs, that active verbs are not always uſed to denote an action, nor is the nominative before an active verb, conceived in all caſes to be an agent, in the ſtrict ſenſe of that word; that there are many paſſive verbs which have an active ſignification, and active verbs which have a paſſive. From theſe facts, it may be thought a juſt concluſion, that in contriving the different forms of active and paſſive verbs, and their different conſtruction, men have not been governed by a regard to any diſtinction be-

tween action and paſſion, but by chance, or ſome accidental cauſe.

In anſwer to this objection, the fact on which it is founded, muſt be admitted; but I think the concluſion not juſtly drawn from it, for the following reaſons:

1. It ſeems contrary to reaſon, to attribute to chance or accident, what is ſubject to rules, even though there may be exceptions to the rule. The exceptions may, in ſuch a caſe, be attributed to accident, but the rule cannot. There is perhaps hardly any thing in language ſo general, as not to admit of exceptions. It cannot be denied to be a general rule, that verbs and participles have an active and a paſſive voice; and as this is a general rule, not in one language only, but in all the languages we are acquainted with, it ſhews evidently that men, in the earlieſt ſtages, and in all periods of ſociety, have diſtinguiſhed action from paſſion.

2. It is to be obſerved, that the forms of language are often applied to purpoſes different from thoſe for which they were originally intended. The varieties of a language, even the moſt perfect, can never be made equal to all the variety of human conceptions. The forms and modifications of language muſt be confined within certain limits, that they may not exceed the capacity of human memory. Therefore, in all languages, there muſt be a kind of frugality uſed, to make one form of expreſſion ſerve many different

different purpoſes, like Sir Hudibras' dagger, which, though made to ſtab or break a head, was put to many other uſes. Many examples might be produced of this frugality in language. Thus the Latins and Greeks had five or ſix caſes of nouns, to expreſs all the various relations that one thing could bear to another. The genitive caſe muſt have been at firſt intended to expreſs ſome one capital relation, ſuch as that of poſſeſſion or of property; but it would be very difficult to enumerate all the relations which, in the progreſs of language, it was uſed to expreſs. The ſame obſervation may be applied to other caſes of nouns.

The ſlighteſt ſimilitude or analogy is thought ſufficient to juſtify the extenſion of a form of ſpeech beyond its proper meaning, whenever the language does not afford a more proper form. In the moods of verbs, a few of thoſe which occur moſt frequently are diſtinguiſhed by different forms, and theſe are made to ſupply all the forms that are wanting. The ſame obſervation may be applied to what is called the *voices* of verbs. An active and a paſſive are the capital ones; ſome languages have more, but no language ſo many as to anſwer to all the variations of human thought. We cannot always coin new ones, and therefore muſt uſe ſome one or other of thoſe that are to be found in the language, though at firſt intended for another purpoſe.

3. A third obſervation in anſwer to the objection is, That we can point out a cauſe of the frequent miſapplication of active verbs, to things which have no proper activity: A cauſe which extends to the greater part of ſuch miſapplications, and which confirms the account I have given of the proper intention of active and paſſive verbs.

As there is no principle, that appears to be more univerſally acknowledged by mankind, from the firſt dawn of reaſon, than, that every change we obſerve in nature muſt have a cauſe; ſo this is no ſooner perceived, than there ariſes in the human mind, a ſtrong deſire to know the cauſes of thoſe changes that fall within our obſervation. *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas*, is the voice of nature in all men. Nor is there any thing that more eaſily diſtinguiſhes the rational from the brute creation, than this avidity to know the cauſes of things, of which I ſee no ſign in brute animals.

It muſt ſurely be admitted, that in thoſe periods wherein languages are formed, men are but poorly furniſhed for carrying on this inveſtigation with ſucceſs. We ſee, that the experience of thouſands of years is neceſſary to bring men into the right track in this inveſtigation, if indeed they can yet be ſaid to be brought into it. What innumerable errors rude ages muſt fall into, with regard to cauſes, from impatience to judge, and inability to judge right, we may conjecture

jecture from reaſon, and may ſee from experience; from which I think, it is evident, that ſuppoſing active verbs to have been originally intended to expreſs what is properly called action, and their nominatives to expreſs the agent; yet, in the rude and barbarous ſtate wherein languages are formed, there muſt be innumerable miſapplications of ſuch verbs and nominatives, and many things ſpoken of as active, which have no real activity.

To this we may add, that it is a general prejudice of our early years, and of rude nations, when we perceive any thing to be changed, and do not perceive any other thing which we can believe to be the cauſe of that change, to impute it to the thing itſelf, and conceive it to be active and animated, ſo far as to have the power of producing that change in itſelf. Hence, to a child, or to a ſavage, all nature ſeems to be animated; the ſea, the earth, the air, the ſun, moon, and ſtars, rivers, fountains and groves, are conceived to be active and animated beings. As this is a ſentiment natural to man in his rude ſtate, it has, on that account, even in poliſhed nations, the veriſimilitude that is required in poetical fiction and fable, and makes perſonification one of the moſt agreeable figures in poetry and eloquence.

The origin of this prejudice probably is, that we judge of other things by ourſelves, and there-

fore are diſpoſed to aſcribe to them that life and activity which we know to be in ourſelves.

A little girl aſcribes to her doll, the paſſions and ſentiments ſhe feels in herſelf. Even brutes ſeem to have ſomething of this nature. A young cat, when ſhe ſees any briſk motion in a feather or a ſtraw, is prompted, by natural inſtinct, to hunt it as ſhe would hunt a mouſe.

Whatever be the origin of this prejudice in mankind, it has a powerful influence upon language, and leads men, in the ſtructure of language, to aſcribe action to many things that are merely paſſive; becauſe, when ſuch forms of ſpeech were invented, thoſe things were really believed to be active. Thus we ſay, the wind blows, the ſea rages, the ſun riſes and ſets, bodies gravitate and move.

When experience diſcovers that theſe things are altogether inactive, it is eaſy to correct our opinion about them; but it is not ſo eaſy to alter the eſtabliſhed forms of language. The moſt perfect and the moſt poliſhed languages are like old furniture, which is never perfectly ſuited to the preſent taſte, but retains ſomething of the faſhion of the times when it was made.

Thus, though all men of knowledge believe, that the ſucceſſion of day and night is owing to the rotation of the earth round its axis, and not to any diurnal motion of the heavens; yet we find ourſelves under a neceſſity of ſpeaking in the old ſtyle, of the ſun's riſing and going down,

and

and coming to the meridian. And this ſtyle is uſed, not only in converſing with the vulgar, but when men of knowledge converſe with one another. And if we ſhould ſuppoſe the vulgar to be at laſt ſo far enlightened, as to have the ſame belief with the learned, of the cauſe of day and night, the ſame ſtyle would ſtill be uſed.

From this inſtance we may learn, that the language of mankind may furniſh good evidence of opinions which have been early and univerſally entertained, and that the forms contrived for expreſſing ſuch opinions, may remain in uſe after the opinions which gave riſe to them have been greatly changed.

Active verbs appear plainly to have been firſt contrived to expreſs action. They are ſtill in general applied to this purpoſe. And though we find many inſtances of the application of active verbs to things which we now believe not to be active, this ought to be aſcribed to mens having once had the belief that thoſe things are active, and perhaps, in ſome caſes, to this, that forms of expreſſion are commonly extended, in courſe of time, beyond their original intention, either from analogy, or becauſe more proper forms for the purpoſe are not found in the language.

Even the miſapplication of this notion of action and active power ſhews that there is ſuch a notion in the human mind, and ſhews the neceſſity there is in philoſophy of diſtinguiſhing the

proper application of theſe words, from the vague and improper application of them, founded on common language, or on popular prejudice.

Another argument to ſhew that all men have a notion or idea of active power is, that there are many operations of mind common to all men who have reaſon, and neceſſary in the ordinary conduct of life, which imply a belief of active power in ourſelves and in others.

All our volitions and efforts to act, all our deliberations, our purpoſes and promiſes, imply a belief of active power in ourſelves; our counſels, exhortations and commands, imply a belief of active power in thoſe to whom they are addreſſed.

If a man ſhould make an effort to fly to the moon; if he ſhould even deliberate about it, or reſolve to do it, we ſhould conclude him to be lunatic; and even lunacy would not account for his conduct, unleſs it made him believe the thing to be in his power.

If a man promiſes to pay me a ſum of money to-morrow, without believing that it will then be in his power, he is not an honeſt man; and, if I did not believe that it will then be in his power, I ſhould have no dependence on his promiſe.

All our power is, without doubt, derived from the Author of our being, and, as he gave it freely, he may take it away when he will. No man can be certain of the continuance of any of his powers of body or mind for a moment; and, therefore,

therefore, in every promiſe, there is a condition underſtood, to wit, if we live, if we retain that health of body and ſoundneſs of mind which is neceſſary to the performance, and if nothing happen, in the providence of GOD, which puts it out of our power. The rudeſt ſavages are taught by nature to admit theſe conditions in all promiſes, whether they be expreſſed or not; and no man is charged with breach of promiſe, when he fails through the failure of theſe conditions.

It is evident, therefore, that, without the belief of ſome active power, no honeſt man would make a promiſe, no wiſe man would truſt to a promiſe; and it is no leſs evident, that the belief of active power, in ourſelves, or in others, implies an idea or notion of active power.

The ſame reaſoning may be applied to every inſtance wherein we give counſel to others, wherein we perſuade or command. As long, therefore, as mankind are beings who can deliberate, and reſolve, and will, as long as they can give counſel, and exhort, and command, they muſt believe the exiſtence of active power in themſelves, and in others, and therefore muſt have a notion or idea of active power.

It might further be obſerved, that power is the proper and immediate object of ambition, one of the moſt univerſal paſſions of the human mind, and that which makes the greateſt figure in the hiſtory of all ages. Whether Mr HUME, in defence of his ſyſtem, would maintain that there

there is no ſuch paſſion in mankind as ambition, or that ambition is not a vehement deſire of power, or that men may have a vehement deſire of power, without having any idea of power, I will not pretend to divine.

I cannot help repeating my apology for inſiſting ſo long in the refutation of ſo great an abſurdity. It is a capital doctrine in a late celebrated ſyſtem of human nature, that we have no idea of power, not even in the Deity; that we are not able to diſcover a ſingle inſtance of it, either in body or ſpirit, either in ſuperior or inferior natures; and that we deceive ourſelves when we imagine that we are poſſeſſed of any idea of this kind.

To ſupport this important doctrine, and the out-works that are raiſed in its defence, a great part of the firſt volume of the Treatiſe of Human Nature is employed. That ſyſtem abounds with concluſions the moſt abſurd that ever were advanced by any Philoſopher, deduced with great acuteneſs and ingenuity from principles commonly received by Philoſophers. To reject ſuch concluſions as unworthy of a hearing, would be diſreſpectful to the ingenious author; and to refute them is difficult, and appears ridiculous.

It is difficult, becauſe we can hardly find principles to reaſon from, more evident than thoſe we wiſh to prove; and it appears ridiculous, becauſe, as this author juſtly obſerves, next to the

the ridicule of denying an evident truth, is that of taking much pains to prove it.

Proteſtants complain, with juſtice, of the hardſhip put upon them by Roman Catholics, in requiring them to prove that bread and wine is not fleſh and blood. They have, however, ſubmitted to this hardſhip for the ſake of truth. I think it is no leſs hard to be put to prove that men have an idea of power.

What convinces myſelf that I have an idea of power is, that I am conſcious that I know what I mean by that word, and, while I have this conſciouſneſs, I diſdain equally to hear arguments for or againſt my having ſuch an idea. But if we would convince thoſe, who, being led away by prejudice, or by authority, deny that they have any ſuch idea, we muſt condeſcend to uſe ſuch arguments as the ſubject will afford, and ſuch as we ſhould uſe with a man who ſhould deny that mankind have any idea of magnitude or of equality.

The arguments I have adduced are taken from theſe five topics: 1. That there are many things that we can affirm or deny concerning power, with underſtanding. 2. That there are, in all languages, words ſignifying, not only power, but ſignifying many other things that imply power, ſuch as, action and paſſion, cauſe and effect, energy, operation, and others. 3. That in the ſtructure of all languages, there is an active and paſſive form in verbs and participles, and a different

ent

ent conſtruction adapted to theſe forms, of which diverſity no account can be given, but that it has been intended to diſtinguiſh action from paſſion. 4. That there are many operations of the human mind familiar to every man come to the uſe of reaſon, and neceſſary in the ordinary conduct of life, which imply a conviction of ſome degree of power in ourſelves and in others. 5. That the deſire of power is one of the ſtrongeſt paſſions of human nature.

CHAP. III.

Of Mr LOCKE's *Account of our Idea of Power.*

THIS author, having refuted the Carteſian doctrine of innate ideas, took up, perhaps too raſhly, an opinion that all our ſimple ideas are got, either by ſenſation or by reflection; that is, by our external ſenſes, or by conſciouſneſs of the operations of our own minds.

Through the whole of his Eſſay, he ſhews a fatherly affection to this opinion, and often ſtrains very hard to reduce our ſimple ideas to one of thoſe ſources, or both. Of this, ſeveral inſtances might be given, in his account of our idea of ſubſtance, of duration, of perſonal identity. Omitting theſe, as foreign to the preſent ſubject, I ſhall only take notice of the account he gives of our idea of power.

The

The ſum of it is, That obſerving, by our ſenſes, various changes in objects, we collect a poſſibility in one object to be changed, and in another a poſſibility of making that change, and ſo come by that idea which we call power.

Thus we ſay the fire has a power to melt gold, and gold has power to be melted; the firſt he calls active, the ſecond paſſive power.

He thinks, however, that we have the moſt diſtinct notion of active power, by attending to the power which we ourſelves exert, in giving motion to our bodies when at reſt, or in directing our thoughts to this or the other object as we will. And this way of forming the idea of power he attributes to reflection, as he refers the former to ſenſation.

On this account of the origin of our idea of power, I would beg leave to make two remarks, with the reſpect that is moſt juſtly due to ſo great a Philoſopher, and ſo good a man.

1. Whereas he diſtinguiſhes power into *active* and *paſſive*, I conceive paſſive power is no power at all. He means by it, the poſſibility of being changed. To call this *power*, ſeems to be a miſapplication of the word. I do not remember to have met with the phraſe *paſſive power* in any other good author. Mr LOCKE ſeems to have been unlucky in inventing it; and it deſerves not to be retained in our language.

Perhaps he was unwarily led into it, as an oppoſite to active power. But I conceive we call

call certain powers *active*, to diſtinguiſh them from other powers that are called *ſpeculative*. As all mankind diſtinguiſh action from ſpeculation, it is very proper to diſtinguiſh the powers by which thoſe different operations are performed, into active and ſpeculative. Mr LOCKE indeed acknowledges that active power is more properly called power; but I ſee no propriety at all in paſſive power; it is a powerleſs power, and a contradiction in terms.

2. I would obſerve, that Mr LOCKE ſeems to have impoſed upon himſelf, in attempting to reconcile this account of the idea of power to his favourite doctrine, That all our ſimple ideas are ideas of ſenſation, or of reflection.

There are two ſteps, according to his account, which the mind takes, in forming this idea of power; *firſt*, It obſerves changes in things; and, *ſecondly*, From theſe changes, it infers a cauſe of them, and a power to produce them.

If both theſe ſteps are operations of the external ſenſes, or of conſciouſneſs, then the idea of power may be called an idea of ſenſation, or of reflection. But, if either of thoſe ſteps requires the co-operation of other powers of the mind, it will follow, that the idea of power cannot be got by ſenſation, nor by reflection, nor by both together. Let us, therefore, conſider each of theſe ſteps by itſelf.

Firſt, We obſerve various changes in things. And Mr LOCKE takes it for granted, that changes in

in external things are obſerved by our ſenſes, and that changes in our thoughts are obſerved by conſciouſneſs.

I grant that it may be ſaid, that changes in things are obſerved by our ſenſes, when we do not mean to exclude every other faculty from a ſhare in this operation. And it would be ridiculous to cenſure the phraſe, when it is ſo uſed in popular diſcourſe. But it is neceſſary to Mr LOCKE's purpoſe, that changes in external things ſhould be obſerved by the ſenſes alone, excluding every other faculty; becauſe every faculty that is neceſſary in order to obſerve the change, will claim a ſhare in the origin of the idea of power.

Now, it is evident, that memory is no leſs neceſſary than the ſenſes, in order to our obſerving changes in external things, and therefore the idea of power, derived from the changes obſerved, may as juſtly be aſcribed to memory as to the ſenſes.

Every change ſuppoſes two ſtates of the thing changed. Both theſe ſtates may be paſt; one of them at leaſt muſt be paſt; and one only can be preſent. By our ſenſes we may obſerve the preſent ſtate of the thing; but memory muſt ſupply us with the paſt; and, unleſs we remember the paſt ſtate, we can perceive no change.

The ſame obſervation may be applied to conſciouſneſs. The truth, therefore, is, that, by the ſenſes alone, without memory, or by conſciouſneſs alone, without memory, no change can be obſerved. Every idea, therefore, that is derived from

from obſerving changes in things, muſt have its origin, partly from memory, and not from the ſenſes alone, nor from conſciouſneſs alone, nor from both together.

The *ſecond* ſtep made by the mind in forming this idea of power is this: From the changes obſerved we collect a cauſe of thoſe changes, and a power to produce them.

Here one might aſk Mr. LOCKE, whether it is by our ſenſes that we draw this concluſion, or is it by conſciouſneſs? Is reaſoning the province of the ſenſes, or is it the province of conſciouſneſs? If the ſenſes can draw one concluſion from premiſes, they may draw five hundred, and demonſtrate the whole elements of EUCLID.

Thus, I think, it appears, that the account which Mr LOCKE himſelf gives of the origin of our idea of power, cannot be reconciled to his favourite doctrine, That all our ſimple ideas have their origin from ſenſation or reflection; and that, in attempting to derive the idea of power from theſe two ſources only, he unawares brings in our memory, and our reaſoning power, for a ſhare in its origin.

CHAP. IV.

Of Mr HUME's *Opinion of the Idea of Power.*

THIS very ingenious author adopts the principle of Mr LOCKE before mentioned, That all our ſimple ideas are derived either from ſenſation

ſation or reflection. This he ſeems to underſtand, even in a ſtricter ſenſe than Mr LOCKE did. For he will have all our ſimple ideas to be copies of preceding impreſſions, either of our external ſenſes or of conſciouſneſs. "After "the moſt accurate examination," ſays he "of "which I am capable, I venture to affirm, that "the rule here holds without any exception, and "that every ſimple idea has a ſimple impreſſion "which reſembles it, and every ſimple impreſſion "a correſpondent idea. Every one may ſatisfy "himſelf in this point, by running over as many "as he pleaſes."

I obſerve here, by the way, that this concluſion is formed by the author raſhly and unphiloſophically. For it is a concluſion that admits of no proof, but by induction; and it is upon this ground that he himſelf founds it. The induction cannot be perfect till every ſimple idea that can enter into the human mind be examined, and be ſhewn to be copied from a reſembling impreſſion of ſenſe or of conſciouſneſs. No man can pretend to have made this examination of all our ſimple ideas without exception; and, therefore, no man can, conſiſtently with the rules of philoſophiſing, aſſure us, that this concluſion holds without any exception.

The author profeſſes, in his title-page, to introduce into moral ſubjects the experimental method of reaſoning. This was a very laudable attempt; but he ought to have known, that it is

a rule in the experimental method of reaſoning, That concluſions, eſtabliſhed by induction ought never to exclude exceptions, if any ſuch ſhould afterwards appear from obſervation or experiment. Sir ISAAC NEWTON, ſpeaking of ſuch concluſions, ſays, " Et ſi quando in experiundo " poſtea reperiatur aliquid, quod a parte con- " traria faciat; tum demum, non ſine iſtis ex- " ceptionibus affirmetur concluſio opportebit." " But," ſays our author, " I will venture to af- " firm, that the rule here holds without any ex- " ception."

Accordingly, throughout the whole treatiſe, this general rule is conſidered as of ſufficient authority, in itſelf, to exclude, even from a hearing, every thing that appears to be an exception to it. This is contrary to the fundamental principles of the experimental method of reaſoning, and therefore may be called raſh and unphiloſophical.

Having thus eſtabliſhed this general principle, the author does great execution by it among our ideas. He finds, that we have no idea of ſubſtance, material or ſpiritual; that body and mind are only certain trains of related impreſſions and ideas; that we have no idea of ſpace or duration, and no idea of power, active or intellective.

Mr LOCKE uſed his principle of ſenſation and reflection with greater moderation and mercy. Being unwilling to thruſt the ideas we have mentioned into the *limbo* of non-exiſtence, he ſtretches

ſenſation

ſenſation and reflection to the very utmoſt, in order to receive theſe ideas within the pale; and draws them into it, as it were by violence.

But this author, inſtead of ſhewing them any favour, ſeems fond to get rid of them.

Of the ideas mentioned, it is only that of power that concerns our preſent ſubject. And, with regard to this, the author boldly affirms, "That "we never have any idea of power; that we "deceive ourſelves when we imagine we are "poſſeſſed of any idea of this kind."

He begins with obſerving, "That the terms *effi-* "*cacy, agency, power, force, energy,* are all near- "ly ſynonymous; and therefore it is an abſurdity "to employ any of them in defining the reſt. "By this obſervation," ſays he, "we reject at "once all the vulgar definitions which Philoſo- "phers have given of *power* and *efficacy*."

Surely this author was not ignorant, that there are many things of which we have a clear and diſtinct conception, which are ſo ſimple in there nature, that they cannot be defined any other way than by ſynonymous words. It is true that this is not a logical definition, but that there is, as he affirms, an abſurdity in uſing it, when no better can be had, I cannot perceive.

He might here have applied to *power* and *efficacy* what he ſays, in another place, of *pride* and *humility*. "The paſſions of *pride* and *humility*," he ſays, "being ſimple and uniform impreſ- "ſions, it is impoſſible we can ever give a juſt

" definition of them. As the words are of ge-
" neral uſe, and the things they repreſent the
" moſt common of any, every one, of himſelf,
" will be able to form a juſt notion of them with-
" out danger of miſtake."

He mentions Mr LOCKE's account of the idea of power, That, obſerving various changes in things, we conclude, that there muſt be ſomewhere a power capable of producing them, and ſo arrive at laſt, by this reaſoning, at the idea of power and efficacy.

" But," ſays he, " to be ſatisfied that this ex-
" plication is more popular than philoſophical,
" we need but reflect on two very obvious prin-
" ciples; *firſt*, That reaſon alone can never give
" riſe to any original idea; and, *ſecondly*, That
" reaſon, as diſtinguiſhed from experience, can
" never make us conclude, that a cauſe, or pro-
" ductive quality, is abſolutely requiſite to every
" beginning of exiſtence."

Before we conſider the two principles which our author oppoſes to the popular opinion of Mr LOCKE, I obſerve,

Firſt, That there are ſome *popular* opinions, which, on that very account, deſerve more regard from Philoſophers, than this author is willing to beſtow.

That things cannot begin to exiſt, nor undergo any change, without a cauſe that hath power to produce that change, is indeed ſo popular an opinion, that, I believe, this author is the firſt of mankind

mankind that ever called it in queſtion. It is ſo popular, that there is not a man of common prudence who does not act from this opinion, and rely upon it every day of his life. And any man who ſhould conduct himſelf by the contrary opinion, would ſoon be confined as inſane, and continue in that ſtate, till a ſufficient cauſe was found for his enlargement.

Such a popular opinion as this, ſtands upon a higher authority than that of philoſophy, and philoſophy muſt ſtrike ſail to it, if ſhe would not render herſelf contemptible to every man of common underſtanding.

For though, in matters of deep ſpeculation, the multitude muſt be guided by Philoſophers, yet, in things that are within the reach of every man's underſtanding, and upon which the whole conduct of human life turns, the Philoſopher muſt follow the multitude, or make himſelf perfectly ridiculous.

Secondly, I obſerve, that whether this popular opinion be true or falſe, it follows from mens having this opinion, that they have an idea of power. A falſe opinion about power, no leſs than a true, implies an idea of power; for how can men have any opinion, true or falſe, about a thing of which they have no idea?

The *firſt* of the very obvious principles which the author oppoſes to Mr LOCKE's account of the idea of power, is, That reaſon alone can never give riſe to any original idea.

This appears to me ſo far from being a very obvious principle, that the contrary is very obvious.

Is it not our reaſoning faculty that gives riſe to the idea of reaſoning itſelf? As our idea of ſight takes its riſe from our being endowed with that faculty; ſo does our idea of reaſoning. Do not the ideas of demonſtration, of probability, our ideas of a ſyllogiſm, of major, minor and concluſion, of an enthymeme, dilemma, ſorites, and all the various modes of reaſoning, takes their riſe from the faculty of reaſon? Or is it poſſible, that a being, not endowed with the faculty of reaſoning, ſhould have theſe ideas? This principle, therefore, is ſo far from being obviouſly true, that it appears to be obviouſly falſe.

The *ſecond* obvious principle is, That reaſon, as diſtinguiſhed from experience, can never make us conclude, that a cauſe, or productive quality, is abſolutely requiſite to every beginning of exiſtence.

In ſome Eſſays on the Intellectual Powers of Man, I had occaſion to treat of this principle, That every change in nature muſt have a cauſe; and, to prevent repetition, I beg leave to refer the reader to what is ſaid upon this ſubject, *Eſſay* 6. *chap.* 6. I endeavoured to ſhew that it is a firſt principle, evident to all men come to years of underſtanding. Beſides its having been univerſally received, without the leaſt doubt, from the beginning of the world, it has this ſure mark of a firſt principle, that the belief of it is abſolutely

lutely neceſſary in the ordinary affairs of life, and, without it, no man could act with common prudence, or avoid the imputation of inſanity. Yet a Philoſopher, who acted upon the firm belief of it every day of his life, thinks fit, in his cloſet, to call it in queſtion.

He inſinuates here, that we may know it from experience. I endeavoured to ſhew, that we do not learn it from experience, for two reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe it is a neceſſary truth, and has always been received as a neceſſary truth. Experience gives no information of what is neceſſary, or of what muſt be.

We may know from experience, what is, or what was, and from that may probably conclude what ſhall be in like circumſtances; but, with regard to what muſt neceſſarily be, experience is perfectly ſilent.

Thus we know, by unvaried experience, from the beginning of the world, that the ſun and ſtars riſe in the eaſt and ſet in the weſt. But no man believes, that it could not poſſibly have been otherwiſe, or that it did not depend upon the will and power of Him who made the world, whether the earth ſhould revolve to the eaſt or to the weſt.

In like manner, if we had experience, ever ſo conſtant, that every change in Nature we have obſerved, actually had a cauſe, this might afford ground to believe, that, for the future, it ſhall be

ſo; but no ground at all to believe that it muſt be ſo, and cannot be otherwiſe.

Another reaſon to ſhew that this principle is not learned from experience is, That experience does not ſhew us a cauſe of one in a hundred of thoſe changes which we obſerve, and therefore can never teach us that there muſt be a cauſe of all.

Of all the paradoxes this author has advanced, there is not one more ſhocking to the human underſtanding than this, That things may begin to exiſt without a cauſe. This would put an end to all ſpeculation, as well as to all the buſineſs of life. The employment of ſpeculative men, ſince the beginning of the world, has been to inveſtigate the cauſes of things. What pity is it, they never thought of putting the previous queſtion, Whether things have a cauſe or not? This queſtion has at laſt been ſtarted; and what is there ſo ridiculous as not to be maintained by ſome Philoſopher?

Enough has been ſaid upon it, and more, I think, than it deſerves. But, being about to treat of the active powers of the human mind, I thought it improper to take no notice of what has been ſaid by ſo celebrated a Philoſopher, to ſhew, that there is not, in the human mind, any idea of power.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Whether Beings that have no Will nor Underſtanding may have Active Power?

THAT active power is an attribute, which cannot exiſt but in ſome being poſſeſſed of that power, and the ſubject of that attribute, I take for granted as a ſelf-evident truth. Whether there can be active power in a ſubject which has no thought, no underſtanding, no will, is not ſo evident.

The ambiguity of the words *power*, *cauſe*, *agent*, and of all the words related to theſe, tends to perplex this queſtion. The weakneſs of human underſtanding, which gives us only an indirect and relative conception of power, contributes to darken our reaſoning, and ſhould make us cautious and modeſt in our determinations.

We can derive little light in this matter from the events which we obſerve in the courſe of Nature. We perceive changes innumerable in things without us. We know that thoſe changes muſt be produced by the active power of ſome agent; but we neither perceive the agent nor the power, but the change only. Whether the things be active, or merely paſſive, is not eaſily diſcovered. And though it may be an object of curioſity to the ſpeculative few, it does not greatly concern the many.

To

To know the event and the circumſtances that attended it, and to know in what circumſtances like events may be expected, may be of conſequence in the conduct of life; but to know the real efficient, whether it be matter or mind, whether of a ſuperior or inferior order, concerns us little.

Thus it is with regard to all the effects we aſcribe to Nature.

Nature is the name we give to the efficient cauſe of innumerable effects which fall daily under our obſervation. But if it be aſked what Nature is? Whether the firſt univerſal cauſe, or a ſubordinate one, whether one or many, whether intelligent or unintelligent? Upon theſe points we find various conjectures and theories, but no ſolid ground upon which we can reſt. And I apprehend the wiſeſt men are they who are ſenſible that they know nothing of the matter.

From the courſe of events in the natural world, we have ſufficient reaſon to conclude the exiſtence of an eternal intelligent Firſt Cauſe. But whether he acts immediately in the production of thoſe events, or by ſubordinate intelligent agents, or by inſtruments that are unintelligent, and what the number, the nature, and the different offices of thoſe agents or inſtruments may be; theſe I apprehend to be myſteries placed beyond the limits of human knowledge. We ſee an eſtabliſhed order in the ſucceſſion of natural events,

but

but we ſee not the bond that connects them together.

Since we derive ſo little light, with regard to efficient cauſes and their active power, from attention to the natural world, let us next attend to the moral, I mean, to human actions and conduct.

Mr LOCKE obſerves very juſtly, "That, from "the obſervation of the operation of bodies by "our ſenſes, we have but a very imperfect ob- "ſcure idea of active power, ſince they afford "us not any idea in themſelves of the power to "begin any action, either of motion or thought." He adds, "That we find in ourſelves a power "to begin or forbear, continue or end ſeveral "actions of our minds and motions of our bo- "dies, barely by a thought or preference of the "mind, ordering, or, as it were, commanding "the doing or not doing ſuch a particular ac- "tion. This power which the mind has thus "to order the conſideration of any idea, or the "forbearing to conſider it, or to prefer the mo- "tion of any part of the body to its reſt, and "*vice verſa*, in any particular inſtance, is that "which we call *the will*. The actual exerciſe "of that power, by directing any particular "action, or its forbearance, is that which we "call *volition* or *willing*."

According to Mr LOCKE, therefore, the only clear notion or idea we have of active power, is taken from the power which we find in ourſelves to give certain motions to our bodies, or

a certain direction to our thoughts; and this power in ourſelves can be brought into action only by willing or volition.

From this, I think, it follows, that, if we had not will, and that degree of underſtanding which will neceſſarily implies, we could exert no active power, and conſequently could have none: For power that cannot be exerted is no power. It follows alſo, that the active power, of which only we can have any diſtinct conception, can be only in beings that have underſtanding and will.

Power to produce any effect implies power not to produce it. We can conceive no way in which power may be determined to one of theſe rather than the other, in a being that has no will.

Whatever is the effect of active power muſt be ſomething that is contingent. Contingent exiſtence is that which depended upon the power and will of its cauſe. Oppoſed to this, is neceſſary exiſtence, which we aſcribe to the Supreme Being, becauſe his exiſtence is not owing to the power of any being. The ſame diſtinction there is between contingent and neceſſary truth.

That the planets of our ſyſtem go round the ſun from weſt to eaſt, is a contingent truth; becauſe it depended upon the power and will of him who made the planetary ſyſtem, and gave motion to it. That a circle and a right line can cut one another only in two points, is a truth which depends upon no power nor will, and therefore is called neceſſary and immutable. Contingency, therefore, has a relation to active power

power, as all active power is exerted in contingent events; and as such events can have no existence, but by the exertion of active power.

When I observe a plant growing from its seed to maturity, I know that there must be a cause that has power to produce this effect. But I see neither the cause nor the manner of its operation.

But in certain motions of my body and directions of my thought, I know, not only that there must be a cause that has power to produce these effects, but that I am that cause; and I am conscious of what I do in order to the production of them.

From the consciousness of our own activity, seems to be derived, not only the clearest, but the only conception we can form of activity, or the exertion of active power.

As I am unable to form a notion of any intellectual power different in kind from those I possess, the same holds with respect to active power. If all men had been blind, we should have had no conception of the power of seeing, nor any name for it in language. If man had not the powers of abstraction and reasoning, we could not have had any conception of these operations. In like manner, if he had not some degree of active power, and if he were not conscious of the exertion of it in his voluntary actions, it is probable he could have no conception of activity, or of active power.

A train of events following one another ever ſo regularly, could never lead us to the notion of a cauſe, if we had not, from our conſtitution, a conviction of the neceſſity of a cauſe to every event.

And of the manner in which a cauſe may exert its active power, we can have no conception but from conſciouſneſs of the manner in which our own active power is exerted.

With regard to the operations of Nature, it is ſufficient for us to know, that, whatever the agents may be, whatever the manner of their operation, or the extent of their power, they depend upon the Firſt Cauſe, and are under his control; and this indeed is all that we know; beyond this we are left in darkneſs. But, in what regards human actions, we have a more immediate concern.

It is of the higheſt importance to us, as moral and accountable creatures, to know what actions are in our own power, becauſe it is for theſe only that we can be accountable to our Maker, or to our fellow-men in ſociety; by theſe only we can merit praiſe or blame; in theſe only all our prudence, wiſdom and virtue muſt be employed; and, therefore, with regard to them, the wiſe Author of Nature has not left us in the dark.

Every man is led by Nature to attribute to himſelf the free determinations of his own will, and to believe thoſe events to be in his power which depend upon his will. On the other hand,

hand, it is ſelf-evident, that nothing is in our power that is not ſubject to our will.

We grow from childhood to manhood, we digeſt our food, our blood circulates, our heart and arteries beat, we are ſometimes ſick and ſometimes in health; all theſe things muſt be done by the power of ſome agent; but they are not done by our power. How do we know this? Becauſe they are not ſubject to our will. This is the infallible criterion by which we diſtinguiſh what is our doing from what is not; what is in our power from what is not.

Human power, therefore, can only be exerted by will, and we are unable to conceive any active power to be exerted without will. Every man knows infallibly that what is done by his conſcious will and intention, is to be imputed to him as the agent or cauſe; and that whatever is done without his will and intention, cannot be imputed to him with truth.

We judge of the actions and conduct of other men by the ſame rule as we judge of our own. In morals, it is ſelf-evident that no man can be the object either of approbation or of blame for what he did not. But how ſhall we know whether it is his doing or not? If the action depended upon his will, and if he intended and willed it, it is his action in the judgment of all mankind. But if it was done without his knowledge, or without his will and intention, it is as certain

that

that he did it not, and that it ought not to be imputed to him as the agent.

When there is any doubt to whom a particular action ought to be imputed, the doubt ariſes only from our ignorance of facts; when the facts relating to it are known, no man of underſtanding has any doubt to whom the action ought to be imputed.

The general rules of imputation are ſelf-evident. They have been the ſame in all ages, and among all civilized nations. No man blames another for being black or fair, for having a fever or the falling ſickneſs; becauſe theſe things are believed not to be in his power; and they are believed not to be in his power, becauſe they depend not upon his will. We can never conceive that a man's duty goes beyond his power, or that his power goes beyond what depends upon his will.

Reaſon leads us to aſcribe unlimited power to the Supreme Being. But what do we mean by unlimited power? It is power to do whatſoever he wills. To ſuppoſe him to do what he does not will to do, is abſurd.

The only diſtinct conception I can form of active power is, that it is an attribute in a being by which he can do certain things if he wills. This, after all, is only a relative conception. It is relative to the effect, and to the will of producing it. Take away theſe, and the conception vaniſhes. They are the handles by which the mind takes hold of it. When they are taken away,

away, our hold is gone. The ſame is the caſe with regard to other relative conceptions. Thus velocity is a real ſtate of a body, about which Philoſophers reaſon with the force of demonſtration; but our conception of it is relative to ſpace and time. What is velocity in a body? It is a ſtate in which it paſſes through a certain ſpace in a certain time. Space and time are very different from velocity; but we cannot conceive it but by its relation to them. The effect produced, and the will to produce it, are things different from active power, but we can have no conception of it, but by its relation to them.

Whether the conception of an efficient cauſe, and of real activity, could ever have entered into the mind of man, if we had not had the experience of activity in ourſelves, I am not able to determine with certainty. The origin of many of our conceptions, and even of many of our judgments, is not ſo eaſily traced as Philoſophers have generally conceived. No man can recollect the time when he firſt got the conception of an efficient cauſe, or the time when he firſt got the belief that an efficient cauſe is neceſſary to every change in Nature. The conception of an efficient cauſe may very probably be derived from the experience we have had in very early life of our own power to produce certain effects. But the belief, that no event can happen without an efficient cauſe, cannot be derived from experience. We may learn from experience

what is, or what was, but no experience can teach us what neceſſarily muſt be.

In like manner, we probably derive the conception of pain from the experience we have had of it in ourſelves; but our belief that pain can only exiſt in a being that hath life, cannot be got by experience, becauſe it is a neceſſary truth; and no neceſſary truth can have its atteſtation from experience.

If it be ſo that the conception of an efficient cauſe enters into the mind, only from the early conviction we have that we are the efficients of our own voluntary actions, (which I think is moſt probable) the notion of efficiency will be reduced to this, That it is a relation between the cauſe and the effect, ſimilar to that which is between us and our voluntary actions. This is ſurely the moſt diſtinct notion, and, I think, the only notion we can form of real efficiency.

Now it is evident, that, to conſtitute the relation between me and my action, my conception of the action, and will to do it, are eſſential. For, what I never conceived, nor willed, I never did.

If any man, therefore, affirms, that a being may be the efficient cauſe of an action, and have power to produce it, which that being can neither conceive nor will, he ſpeaks a language which I do not underſtand. If he has a meaning, his notion of power and efficiency muſt be eſſentially different from mine; and, until he conveys his notion of efficiency to my underſtanding,

ing, I can no more aſſent to his opinion, than if he ſhould affirm, that a being without life may feel pain.

It ſeems, therefore, to me moſt probable, that ſuch beings only as have ſome degree of underſtanding and will, can poſſeſs active power; and that inanimate beings muſt be merely paſſive, and have no real activity. Nothing we perceive without us affords any good ground for aſcribing active power to any inanimate being; and every thing we can diſcover in our own conſtitution, leads us to think, that active power cannot be exerted without will and intelligence.

CHAP. VI.

Of the efficient Cauſes of the Phænomena of Nature.

IF active power, in its proper meaning, requires a ſubject endowed with will and intelligence, what ſhall we ſay of thoſe active powers which Philoſophers teach us to aſcribe to matter; the powers of corpuſcular attraction, magnetiſm, electricity, gravitation, and others? Is it not univerſally allowed, that heavy bodies deſcend to the earth by the power of gravity; that, by the ſame power, the moon, and all the planets and comets, are retained in their orbits? Have the moſt eminent natural Philoſophers been

impoſing upon us, and giving us words inſtead of real cauſes?

In anſwer to this, I apprehend, that the principles of natural philoſophy have, in modern times, been built upon a foundation that cannot be ſhaken, and that they can be called in queſtion only by thoſe who do not underſtand the evidence on which they ſtand. But the ambiguity of the words *cauſe*, *agency*, *active power*, and the other words related to theſe, has led many to underſtand them, when uſed in natural philoſophy, in a wrong ſenſe, and in a ſenſe which is neither neceſſary for eſtabliſhing the true principles of natural philoſophy, nor was ever meant by the moſt enlightened in that ſcience.

To be convinced of this, we may obſerve, that thoſe very Philoſophers who attribute to matter the power of gravitation, and other active powers, teach us, at the ſame time, that matter is a ſubſtance altogether inert, and merely paſſive; that gravitation, and the other attractive or repulſive powers which they aſcribe to it, are not inherent in its nature, but impreſſed upon it by ſome external cauſe, which they do not pretend to know, or to explain. Now, when we find wiſe men aſcribing action and active power to a ſubſtance which they expreſsly teach us to conſider as merely paſſive and acted upon by ſome unknown cauſe, we muſt conclude, that the action and active power aſcribed to it are not to be underſtood ſtrictly, but in ſome popular ſenſe.

It

It ought likewiſe to be obſerved, that although Philoſophers, for the ſake of being underſtood, muſt ſpeak the language of the vulgar, as when they ſay, the ſun riſes and ſets, and goes through all the ſigns of the zodiac, yet they often think differently from the vulgar. Let us hear what the greateſt of natural Philoſophers ſays, in the 8th definition prefixed to his *principia*, "Voces "autem attractionis, impulſus, vel propenſionis "cujuſcunque in centrum, indifferenter et pro "ſe mutuo promiſcue uſurpo; has voces non "phyſicè ſed mathematicè conſiderando. Un- "de caveat lector, ne per hujus modi voces co- "gitet me ſpeciem vel modum actionis, cauſamve "aut rationem phyſicam, alicubi definire; vel "centris (quæ ſunt puncta mathematica) vires "vere et phyſice tribuere, ſi forte centra trahere, "aut vires centrorum eſſe, dixero."

In all languages, action is attributed to many things which all men of common underſtanding believe to be merely paſſive; thus we ſay, the wind blows, the rivers flow, the ſea rages, the fire burns, bodies move, and impel other bodies.

Every object which undergoes any change, muſt be either active or paſſive in that change. This is ſelf-evident to all men from the firſt dawn of reaſon; and therefore the change is always expreſſed in language, either by an active or a paſſive verb. Nor do I know any verb, expreſſive of a change, which does not imply either action or paſſion. The thing either changes, or it

is changed. But it is remarkable in language, that when an external cauſe of the change is not obvious, the change is always imputed to the thing changed, as if it were animated, and had active power to produce the change in itſelf. So we ſay, the moon changes, the ſun riſes and goes down.

Thus active verbs are very often applied, and active power imputed to things, which a little advance in knowledge and experience teaches us to be merely paſſive. This property, common to all languages, I endeavoured to account for in the ſecond chapter of this Eſſay, to which the reader is referred.

A like irregularity may be obſerved in the uſe of the word ſignifying *cauſe*, in all languages, and of the words related to it.

Our knowledge of cauſes is very ſcanty in the moſt advanced ſtate of ſociety, much more is it ſo in that early period in which language is formed. A ſtrong deſire to know the cauſes of things, is common to all men in every ſtate; but the experience of all ages ſhews, that this keen appetite, rather than go empty, will feed upon the huſks of real knowledge where the fruit cannot be found.

While we are very much in the dark with regard to the real agents or cauſes which produce the phænomena of Nature, and have, at the ſame time, an avidity to know them, ingenious men frame conjectures, which thoſe of weaker underſtanding

ſtanding take for truth. The fare is coarſe, but appetite makes it go down.

Thus, in a very ancient ſyſtem, love and ſtrife were made the cauſes of things. PLATO made the cauſes of things to be matter, ideas, and an efficient architect. ARISTOTLE, matter, form, and privation. DES CARTES thought matter, and a certain quantity of motion given it by the Almighty at firſt, to be all that is neceſſary to make the material world. LEIBNITZ conceived the whole univerſe, even the material part of it, to be made up of *monades*, each of which is active and intelligent, and produces in itſelf, by its own active power, all the changes it undergoes from the beginning of its exiſtence to eternity.

In common language, we give the name of a *cauſe* to a reaſon, a motive, an end, to any circumſtance which is connected with the effect, and goes before it.

ARISTOTLE, and the ſchoolmen after him, diſtinguiſhed four kinds of cauſes, the efficient, the material, the formal, and the final. This, like many of ARISTOTLE's diſtinctions, is only a diſtinction of the various meanings of an ambiguous word; for the efficient, the matter, the form and the end, have nothing common in their nature, by which they may be accounted ſpecies of the ſame *genus*; but the Greek word which we tranſlate *cauſe*, had theſe four different meanings in ARISTOTLE's days, and we have added other meanings. We do not indeed call the

matter or the form of a thing its cauſe; but we have final cauſes, inſtrumental cauſes, occaſional cauſes, and I know not how many others.

Thus the word *cauſe* has been ſo hackneyed, and made to have ſo many different meanings in the writings of Philoſophers, and in the diſcourſe of the vulgar, that its original and proper meaning is loſt in the crowd.

With regard to the phænomena of Nature, the important end of knowing their cauſes, beſides gratifying our curioſity, is, that we may know when to expect them, or how to bring them about. This is very often of real importance in life; and this purpoſe is ſerved, by knowing what, by the courſe of Nature, goes before them and is connected with them; and this, therefore, we call the *cauſe* of ſuch a phænomenon.

If a magnet be brought near to a mariner's compaſs, the needle, which was before at reſt, immediately begins to move, and bends its courſe towards the magnet, or perhaps the contrary way. If an unlearned ſailor is aſked the cauſe of this motion of the needle, he is at no loſs for an anſwer. He tells you it is the magnet; and the proof is clear; for, remove the magnet, and the effect ceaſes; bring it near, and the effect is again produced. It is, therefore, evident to ſenſe, that the magnet is the cauſe of this effect.

A Carteſian Philoſopher enters deeper into the cauſe of this phænomenon. He obſerves, that the magnet does not touch the needle, and therefore

fore can give it no impulſe. He pities the ignorance of the ſailor. The effect is produced, ſays he, by magnetic effluvia, or ſubtile matter, which paſſes from the magnet to the needle, and forces it from its place. He can even ſhew you, in a figure, where theſe magnetic effluvia iſſue from the magnet, what round they take, and what way they return home again. And thus he thinks he comprehends perfectly how, and by what cauſe, the motion of the needle is produced.

A Newtonian Philoſopher inquires what proof can be offered for the exiſtence of magnetic effluvia, and can find none. He therefore holds it as a fiction, a hypotheſis; and he has learned that hypotheſes ought to have no place in the philoſophy of Nature. He confeſſes his ignorance of the real cauſe of this motion, and thinks, that his buſineſs, as a Philoſopher, is only to find from experiment the laws by which it is regulated in all caſes.

Theſe three perſons differ much in their ſentiments with regard to the real cauſe of this phænomenon; and the man who knows moſt is he who is ſenſible that he knows nothing of the matter. Yet all the three ſpeak the ſame language, and acknowledge, that the cauſe of this motion is the attractive or repulſive power of the magnet.

What has been ſaid of this, may be applied to every phænomenon that falls within the compaſs of natural philoſophy. We deceive ourſelves, if

we

we conceive, that we can point out the real efficient cauſe of any one of them.

The grandeſt diſcovery ever made in natural philoſophy, was that of the law of gravitation, which opens ſuch a view of our planetary ſyſtem, that it looks like ſomething divine. But the author of this diſcovery was perfectly aware, that he diſcovered no real cauſe, but only the law or rule, according to which the unknown cauſe operates.

Natural Philoſophers, who think accurately, have a preciſe meaning to the terms they uſe in the ſcience; and when they pretend to ſhew the cauſe of any phænomenon of Nature, they mean by the cauſe, a law of Nature of which that phænomenon is a neceſſary conſequence.

The whole object of natural philoſophy, as NEWTON expreſsly teaches, is reducible to theſe two heads; firſt, by juſt induction from experiment and obſervation, to diſcover the laws of Nature, and then to apply thoſe laws to the ſolution of the phænomena of Nature. This was all that this great Philoſopher attempted, and all that he thought attainable. And this indeed he attained in a great meaſure, with regard to the motions of our planetary ſyſtem, and with regard to the rays of light.

But ſuppoſing that all the phænomena that fall within the reach of our ſenſes, were accounted for from general laws of Nature, juſtly deduced from experience; that is, ſuppoſing natural

tural philoſophy brought to its utmoſt perfection, it does not diſcover the efficient cauſe of any one phænomenon in Nature.

The laws of Nature are the rules according to which the effects are produced; but there muſt be a cauſe which operates according to theſe rules. The rules of navigation never navigated a ſhip. The rules of architecture never built a houſe.

Natural Philoſophers, by great attention to the courſe of Nature, have diſcovered many of her laws, and have very happily applied them to account for many phænomena; but they have never diſcovered the efficient cauſe of any one phænomenon; nor do thoſe who have diſtinct notions of the principles of the ſcience, make any ſuch pretence.

Upon the theatre of Nature we ſee innumerable effects, which require an agent endowed with active power; but the agent is behind the ſcene. Whether it be the Supreme Cauſe alone, or a ſubordinate cauſe or cauſes; and if ſubordinate cauſes be employed by the Almighty, what their nature, their number, and their different offices may be, are things hid, for wiſe reaſons without doubt, from the human eye.

It is only in human actions, that may be imputed for praiſe or blame, that it is neceſſary for us to know who is the agent; and in this, Nature has given us all the light that is neceſſary for our conduct.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Extent of Human Power.

EVERY thing laudable and praiſe-worthy in man, muſt conſiſt in the proper exerciſe of that power which is given him by his Maker. This is the talent which he is required to occupy, and of which he muſt give an account to him who committed it to his truſt.

To ſome perſons more power is given than to others; and to the ſame perſon more at one time and leſs at another. Its exiſtence, its extent, and its continuance, depend ſolely upon the pleaſure of the Almighty; but every man that is accountable muſt have more or leſs of it. For, to call a perſon to account, to approve or diſapprove of his conduct, who had no power to do good or ill, is abſurd. No axiom of EUCLID appears more evident than this.

As power is a valuable gift, to under-rate it is ingratitude to the giver; to over-rate it, begets pride and preſumption, and leads to unſucceſsful attempts. It is therefore, in every man, a point of wiſdom to make a juſt eſtimate of his own power. *Quid ferre recuſent, quid valeant humeri.*

We can only ſpeak of the power of man in general; and as our notion of power is relative to its effects, we can eſtimate its extent only by the effects which it is able to produce.

It

It would be wrong to eſtimate the extent of human power by the effects which it has actually produced. For every man had power to do many things which he did not, and not to do many things which he did; otherwiſe he could not be an object either of approbation or of diſapprobation, to any rational being.

The effects of human power are either immediate, or they are more remote.

The immediate effects, I think, are reducible to two heads. We can give certain motions to our own bodies; and we can give a certain direction to our own thoughts.

Whatever we can do beyond this, muſt be done by one of theſe means, or both.

We can produce no motion in any body in the univerſe, but by moving firſt our own body as an inſtrument. Nor can we produce thought in any other perſon, but by thought and motion in ourſelves.

Our power to move our own body, is not only limited in its extent, but in its nature is ſubject to mechanical laws. It may be compared to a ſpring endowed with the power of contracting or expanding itſelf, but which cannot contract without drawing equally at both ends, nor expand without puſhing equally at both ends; ſo that every action of the ſpring is always accompanied with an equal reaction in a contrary direction.

We

We can conceive a man to have power to move his whole body in any direction, without the aid of any other body, or a power to move one part of his body without the aid of any other part. But philoſophy teaches us that man has no ſuch power.

If he carries his whole body in any direction with a certain quantity of motion, this he can do only by puſhing the earth, or ſome other body, with an equal quantity of motion in the contrary direction. If he but ſtretch out his arm in one direction, the reſt of his body is puſhed with an equal quantity of motion in the contrary direction.

This is the caſe with regard to all animal and voluntary motions, which come within the reach of our ſenſes. They are performed by the contraction of certain muſcles; and a muſcle, when it is contracted, draws equally at both ends. As to the motions antecedent to the contraction of the muſcle, and conſequently upon the volition of the animal, we know nothing, and can ſay nothing about them.

We know not even how thoſe immediate effects of our power are produced by our willing them. We perceive not any neceſſary connection between the volition and exertion on our part, and the motion of our body that follows them.

Anatomiſts inform us, that every voluntary motion of the body is performed by the contraction

tion of certain muſcles, and that the muſcles are contracted by ſome influence derived from the nerves. But, without thinking in the leaſt, either of muſcles or nerves, we will only the external effect, and the internal machinery, without our call, immediately produces that effect.

This is one of the wonders of our frame, which we have reaſon to admire; but to account for it, is beyond the reach of our underſtanding.

That there is an eſtabliſhed harmony between our willing certain motions of our bodies, and the operation of the nerves and muſcles which produces thoſe motions, is a fact known by experience. This volition is an act of the mind. But whether this act of the mind have any phyſical effect upon the nerves and muſcles; or whether it be only an occaſion of their being acted upon by ſome other efficient, according to the eſtabliſhed laws of Nature, is hid from us. So dark is our conception of our own power when we trace it to its origin.

We have good reaſon to believe, that matter had its origin from mind, as well as all its motions; but how, or in what manner, it is moved by mind, we know as little as how it was created.

It is poſſible therefore, for any thing we know, that what we call the immediate effects of our power, may not be ſo in the ſtricteſt ſenſe. Between the will to produce the effect, and the production

production of it, there may be agents or inſtruments of which we are ignorant.

This may leave ſome doubt, whether we be, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, the efficient cauſe of the voluntary motions of our own body. But it can produce no doubt with regard to the moral eſtimation of our actions.

The man who knows that ſuch an event depends upon his will, and who deliberately wills to produce it, is, in the ſtricteſt moral ſenſe, the cauſe of the event; and it is juſtly imputed to him, whatever phyſical cauſes may have concurred in its production.

Thus, he who maliciouſly intends to ſhoot his neighbour dead, and voluntarily does it, is undoubtedly the cauſe of his death, though he did no more to occaſion it than draw the trigger of the gun. He neither gave to the ball its velocity, nor to the powder its expanſive force, nor to the flint and ſteel the power to ſtrike fire; but he knew that what he did muſt be followed by the man's death, and did it with that intention; and therefore he is juſtly chargeable with the murder.

Philoſophers may therefore diſpute innocently, whether we be the proper efficient cauſes of the voluntary motions of our own body; or whether we be only, as MALEBRANCHE thinks, the occaſional cauſes. The determination of this queſtion, if it can be determined, can have no effect on human conduct.

The

The other branch of what is immediately in our power, is to give a certain direction to our own thoughts. This, as well as the firſt branch, is limited in various ways. It is greater in ſome perſons than in others, and in the ſame perſon is very different, according to the health of his body, and the ſtate of his mind. But that men, when free from diſeaſe of body and of mind, have a conſiderable degree of power of this kind, and that it may be greatly increaſed by practice and habit, is ſufficiently evident from experience, and from the natural conviction of all mankind.

Were we to examine minutely into the connection between our volitions, and the direction of our thoughts which obeys theſe volitions; were we to conſider how we are able to give attention to an object for a certain time, and turn our attention to another when we chooſe, we might perhaps find it difficult to determine, whether the mind itſelf be the ſole efficient cauſe of the voluntary changes in the direction of our thoughts, or whether it requires the aid of other efficient cauſes.

I ſee no good reaſon why the diſpute about efficient and occaſional cauſes, may not be applied to the power of directing our thoughts, as well as to the power of moving our bodies. In both caſes, I apprehend the diſpute is endleſs, and, if it could be brought to an iſſue, would be fruitleſs.

Nothing appears more evident to our reaſon, than that there muſt be an efficient cauſe of every change that happens in Nature. But when I attempt to comprehend the manner in which an efficient cauſe operates, either upon body or upon mind, there is a darkneſs which my faculties are not able to penetrate.

However ſmall the immediate effects of human power ſeem to be, its more remote effects are very conſiderable.

In this reſpect, the power of man may be compared to the Nile, the Ganges, and other great rivers, which make a figure upon the globe of the earth, and, traverſing vaſt regions, bring ſometimes great benefit, at other times great miſchief, to many nations; yet, when we trace thoſe rivers to their ſource, we find them to riſe from inconſiderable fountains and rills.

The command of a mighty prince, what is it, but the ſound of his breath, modified by his organs of ſpeech? But it may have great conſequences; it may raiſe armies, equip fleets, and ſpread war and deſolation over a great part of the earth.

The meaneſt of mankind has conſiderable power to do good, and more to hurt himſelf and others.

From this I think we may conclude, that although the degeneracy of mankind be great, and juſtly to be lamented, yet men, in general, are more diſpoſed to employ their power in doing good,

good, than in doing hurt to their fellow-men. The laſt is much more in their power than the firſt; and, if they were as much diſpoſed to it, human ſociety could not ſubſiſt, and the ſpecies muſt ſoon periſh from the earth.

We may firſt conſider the effects which may be produced by human power upon the material ſyſtem.

It is confined indeed to the planet which we inhabit; we cannot remove to another; nor can we produce any change in the annual or diurnal motions of our own.

But, by human power, great changes may be made upon the face of the earth; and thoſe treaſures of metals and minerals that are ſtored up in its bowels, may be diſcovered and brought forth.

The Supreme Being could, no doubt, have made the earth to ſupply the wants of man, without any cultivation by human labour. Many inferior animals, who neither plant, nor ſow, nor ſpin, are provided for by the bounty of Heaven. But this is not the caſe with man.

He has active powers and ingenuity given him, by which he can do much for ſupplying his wants; and his labour is made neceſſary for that purpoſe.

His wants are more than thoſe of any other animal that inhabits this globe; and his reſources are proportioned to them, and put within the ſphere of his power.

The earth is left by Nature in ſuch a ſtate as to require cultivation for the accommodation of man.

It is capable of cultivation, in moſt places, to ſuch a degree, that, by human labour, it may afford ſubſiſtence to an hundred times the number of men it could in its natural ſtate.

Every tribe of men, in every climate, muſt labour for their ſubſiſtence and accommodation; and their ſupply is more or leſs comfortable, in proportion to the labour properly employed for that purpoſe.

It is evidently the intention of Nature, that man ſhould be laborious, and that he ſhould exert his powers of body and mind for his own, and for the common good. And, by his power properly applied, he may make great improvement upon the fertility of the earth, and a great addition to his own accommodation and comfortable ſtate.

By clearing, tilling and manuring the ground, by planting and ſowing, by building cities and harbours, draining marſhes and lakes, making rivers navigable, and joining them by canals, by manufacturing the rude materials which the earth, duly cultivated, produces in abundance, by the mutual exchange of commodities and of labour, he may make the barren wilderneſs the habitation of rich and populous ſtates.

If we compare the city of Venice, the province of Holland, the empire of China, with thoſe places

places of the earth which never felt the hand of induſtry, we may form ſome conception of the extent of human power upon the material ſyſtem, in changing the face of the earth, and furniſhing the accommodations of human life.

But, in order to produce thoſe happy changes, man himſelf muſt be improved.

His animal faculties are ſufficient for the preſervation of the ſpecies; they grow up of themſelves, like the trees of the foreſt, which require only the force of Nature and the influences of Heaven.

His rational and moral faculties, like the earth itſelf, are rude and barren by Nature, but capable of a high degree of culture; and this culture he muſt receive from parents, from inſtructors, from thoſe with whom he lives in ſociety, joined with his own induſtry.

If we conſider the changes that may be produced by man upon his own mind, and upon the minds of others, they appear to be great.

Upon his own mind he may make great improvement, in acquiring the treaſures of uſeful knowledge, the habits of ſkill in arts, the habits of wiſdom, prudence, ſelf-command, and every other virtue. It is the conſtitution of Nature, that ſuch qualities as exalt and dignify human nature are to be acquired by proper exertions; and, by a contrary conduct, ſuch qualities as debaſe it below the condition of brutes.

Even upon the minds of others, great effects may be produced by means within the compaſs of human power; by means of good education, of proper inſtruction, of perſuaſion, of good example, and by the diſcipline of laws and government.

That theſe have often had great and good effects on the civilization and improvement of individuals, and of nations, cannot be doubted. But what happy effects they might have, if applied univerſally with the ſkill and addreſs that is within the reach of human wiſdom and power, is not eaſily conceived, or to what pitch the happineſs of human ſociety, and the improvement of the ſpecies, might be carried.

What a noble, what a divine employment of human power is here aſſigned us? How ought it to rouſe the ambition of parents, of inſtructors, of lawgivers, of magiſtrates, of every man in his ſtation, to contribute his part towards the accompliſhment of ſo glorious an end?

The power of man over his own and other minds, when we trace it to its origin, is involved in darkneſs, no leſs than his power to move his own and other bodies.

How far we are properly efficient cauſes, how far occaſional cauſes, I cannot pretend to determine.

We know that habit produces great changes in the mind; but how it does ſo, we know not.

We

We know, that example has a powerful, and, in the early period of life, almoſt an irreſiſtible effect; but we know not how it produces this effect. The communication of thought, ſentiment and paſſion, from one mind to another, has ſomething in it as myſterious as the communication of motion from one body to another.

We perceive one event to follow another, according to eſtabliſhed laws of Nature, and we are accuſtomed to call the firſt the cauſe, and the laſt the effect, without knowing what is the bond that unites them. In order to produce a certain event, we uſe means which, by laws of Nature, are connected with that event; and we call ourſelves the cauſe of that event, though other efficient cauſes may have had the chief hand in its production.

Upon the whole, human power, in its exiſtence, in its extent, and in its exertions, is entirely dependent upon GOD, and upon the laws of Nature which he has eſtabliſhed. This ought to baniſh pride and arrogance from the moſt mighty of the ſons of men. At the ſame time, that degree of power which we have received from the bounty of Heaven, is one of the nobleſt gifts of GOD to man; of which we ought not to be inſenſible, that we may not be ungrateful, and that we may be excited to make the proper uſe of it.

The extent of human power is perfectly ſuited to the ſtate of man, as a ſtate of improvement

and diſcipline. It is ſufficient to animate us to the nobleſt exertions. By the proper exerciſe of this gift of GOD, human nature, in individuals and in ſocieties, may be exalted to a high degree of dignity and felicity, and the earth become a paradiſe. On the contrary, its perverſion and abuſe is the cauſe of moſt of the evils that afflict human life.

ESSAY

ESSAY II.

OF THE WILL.

CHAP. I.

Obſervations concerning the Will.

EVERY man is conſcious of a power to determine, in things which he conceives to depend upon his determination. To this power we give the name of *will;* and, as it is uſual, in the operations of the mind, to give the ſame name to the power and to the act of that power, the term *will* is often put to ſignify the act of determining, which more properly is called *volition.*

Volition, therefore, ſignifies the act of willing and determining, and will is put indifferently to ſignify either the power of willing or the act.

But the term *will* has very often, eſpecially in the writings of Philoſophers, a more extenſive meaning, which we muſt carefully diſtinguiſh from that which we have now given.

In the general diviſion of our faculties into underſtanding and will, our paſſions, appetites and affections, are comprehended under the will; and ſo it is made to ſignify, not only our determination

mination to act or not to act, but every motive and incitement to action.

It is this, probably, that has led ſome Philoſophers to repreſent deſire, averſion, hope, fear, joy, ſorrow, all our appetites, paſſions and affections, as different modifications of the will, which, I think, tends to confound things which are very different in their nature.

The advice given to a man, and his determination conſequent to that advice, are things ſo different in their nature, that it would be improper to call them modifications of one and the ſame thing. In like manner, the motives to action, and the determination to act or not to act, are things that have no common nature, and therefore ought not to be confounded under one name, or repreſented as different modifications of the ſame thing.

For this reaſon, in ſpeaking of the will in this Eſſay, I do not comprehend under that term any of the incitements or motives which may have an influence upon our determinations, but ſolely the determination itſelf, and the power to determine.

Mr Locke has conſidered this operation of the mind more attentively, and diſtinguiſhed it more accurately, than ſome very ingenious authors who wrote after him.

He defines volition to be, "An act of the "mind knowingly exerting that dominion it "takes itſelf to have over any part of the man,

"by

" by employing it in, or with-holding it from " any particular action."

It may more briefly be defined, The determination of the mind to do, or not to do ſomething which we conceive to be in our power.

If this were given as a ſtrictly logical definition, it would be liable to this objection, that the determination of the mind is only another term for volition. But it ought to be obſerved, that the moſt ſimple acts of the mind do not admit of a logical definition. The way to form a clear notion of them is, to reflect attentively upon them as we feel them in ourſelves. Without this reflection, no definition can give us a diſtinct conception of them.

For this reaſon, rather than ſift any definition of the will, I ſhall make ſome obſervations upon it, which may lead us to reflect upon it, and to diſtinguiſh it from other acts of mind, which, from the ambiguity of words, are apt to be confounded with it.

Firſt, Every act of will muſt have an object. He that wills muſt will ſomething; and that which he wills is called the object of his volition. As a man cannot think without thinking of ſomething, nor remember without remembering ſomething, ſo neither can he will without willing ſomething. Every act of will, therefore, muſt have an object; and the perſon who wills muſt have ſome conception, more or leſs diſtinct, of what he wills.

By

By this, things done voluntarily are diſtinguiſhed from things done merely from inſtinct, or merely from habit.

A healthy child, ſome hours after its birth, feels the ſenſation of hunger, and, if applied to the breaſt, ſucks and ſwallows its food very perfectly. We have no reaſon to think, that, before it ever ſucked, it has any conception of that complex operation, or how it is performed. It cannot, therefore, with propriety, be ſaid, that it wills to ſuck.

Numberleſs inſtances might be given of things done by animals without any previous conception of what they are to do; without the intention of doing it. They act by ſome inward blind impulſe, of which the efficient cauſe is hid from us; and though there is an end evidently intended by the action, this intention is not in the animal, but in its Maker.

Other things are done by habit, which cannot properly be called voluntary. We ſhut our eyes ſeveral times every minute while we are awake; no man is conſcious of willing this every time he does it.

A *ſecond* obſervation is, That the immediate object of will muſt be ſome action of our own.

By this, will is diſtinguiſhed from two acts of the mind, which ſometimes take its name, and thereby are apt to be confounded with it; theſe are deſire and command.

The

The diſtinction between will and deſire has been well explained by Mr LOCKE; yet many later writers have overlooked it, and have repreſented deſire as a modification of will.

Deſire and will agree in this, that both muſt have an object, of which we muſt have ſome conception; and therefore both muſt be accompanied with ſome degree of underſtanding. But they differ in ſeveral things.

The object of deſire may be any thing which appetite, paſſion or affection, leads us to purſue; it may be any event which we think good for us, or for thoſe to whom we are well affected. I may deſire meat, or drink, or eaſe from pain: But to ſay that I will meat, or will drink, or will eaſe from pain, is not Engliſh. There is therefore a diſtinction in common language between deſire and will. And the diſtinction is, That what we will muſt be an action, and our own action; what we deſire may not be our own action, it may be no action at all.

A man deſires that his children may be happy, and that they may behave well. Their being happy is no action at all; their behaving well is not his action but theirs.

With regard to our own actions, we may deſire what we do not will, and will what we do not deſire; nay, what we have a great averſion to.

A man a-thirſt has a ſtrong deſire to drink, but, for ſome particular reaſon, he determines not to gratify his deſire. A judge, from a regard

to

to juſtice, and to the duty of his office, dooms a criminal to die, while, from humanity or particular affection, he deſires that he ſhould live. A man for health may take a nauſeous draught, for which he has no deſire but a great averſion. Deſire therefore, even when its object is ſome action of our own, is only an incitement to will, but it is not volition. The determination of the mind may be, not to do what we deſire to do. But as deſire is often accompanied by will, we are apt to overlook the diſtinction between them.

The command of a perſon is ſometimes called his will, ſometimes his deſire; but when theſe words are uſed properly, they ſignify three different acts of the mind.

The immediate object of will is ſome action of our own; the object of a command is ſome action of another perſon, over whom we claim authority; the object of deſire may be no action at all.

In giving a command all theſe acts concur; and as they go together, it is not uncommon in language, to give to one the name which properly belongs to another.

A command being a voluntary action, there muſt be a will to give the command: Some deſire is commonly the motive to that act of will, and the command is the effect of it.

Perhaps it may be thought that a command is only a deſire expreſſed by language, that the thing commanded ſhould be done. But it is not ſo.

ſo. For a deſire may be expreſſed by language when there is no command; and there may poſſibly be a command without any deſire that the thing commanded ſhould be done. There have been inſtances of tyrants who have laid grievous commands upon their ſubjects, in order to reap the penalty of their diſobedience, or to furniſh a pretence for their puniſhment.

We might further obſerve, that a command is a ſocial act of the mind. It can have no exiſtence but by a communication of thought to ſome intelligent being; and therefore implies a belief that there is ſuch a being, and that we can communicate our thoughts to him.

Deſire and will are ſolitary acts, which do not imply any ſuch communication or belief.

The immediate object of volition therefore, muſt be ſome action, and our own action.

A *third* obſervation is, That the object of our volition muſt be ſomething which we believe to be in our power, and to depend upon our will.

A man may deſire to make a viſit to the moon, or to the planet Jupiter, but he cannot will or determine to do it; becauſe he knows it is not in his power. If an inſane perſon ſhould make an attempt, his inſanity muſt firſt make him believe it to be in his power.

A man in his ſleep may be ſtruck with a palſy, which deprives him of the power of ſpeech; when he awakes, he attempts to ſpeak, not knowing that he has loſt the power. But when

he

he knows by experience that the power is gone, he ceaſes to make the effort.

The ſame man, knowing that ſome perſons have recovered the power of ſpeech after they had loſt it by a paralytical ſtroke, may now and then make an effort. In this effort, however, there is not properly a will to ſpeak, but a will to try whether he can ſpeak or not.

In like manner, a man may exert his ſtrength to raiſe a weight which is too heavy for him. But he always does this, either from the belief that he can raiſe the weight, or for a trial whether he can or not. It is evident therefore, that what we will muſt be believed to be in our power, and to depend upon our will.

The *next* obſervation is, That when we will to do a thing immediately, the volition is accompanied with an effort to execute that which we willed.

If a man wills to raiſe a great weight from the ground by the ſtrength of his arm, he makes an effort for that purpoſe proportioned to the weight he determines to raiſe. A great weight requires a great effort; a ſmall weight a leſs effort. We ſay indeed, that to raiſe a very ſmall body requires no effort at all. But this, I apprehend, muſt be underſtood either as a figurative way of ſpeaking, by which things very ſmall are accounted as nothing; or it is owing to our giving no attention to very ſmall efforts, and therefore having no name for them.

Great

Great efforts, whether of body or mind, are attended with difficulty, and when long continued produce laſſitude, which requires that they ſhould be intermitted. This leads us to reflect upon them and to give them a name. The name *effort* is commonly appropriated to them; and thoſe that are made with eaſe, and leave no ſenſible effect, paſs without obſervation and without a name, though they be of the ſame kind, and differ only in degree from thoſe to which the name is given.

This effort we are conſcious of, if we will but give attention to it; and there is nothing in which we are in a more ſtrict ſenſe active.

The *laſt* obſervation is, That in all determinations of the mind that are of any importance, there muſt be ſomething in the preceding ſtate of the mind that diſpoſes or inclines us to that determination.

If the mind were always in a ſtate of perfect indifference, without any incitement, motive, or reaſon, to act, or not to act, to act one way rather than another, our active power, having no end to purſue, no rule to direct its exertions, would be given in vain. We ſhould either be altogether inactive, and never will to do any thing, or our volitions would be perfectly unmeaning and futile, being neither wiſe nor fooliſh, virtuous nor vicious.

We have reaſon therefore to think, that to every being to whom God hath given any de-

gree of active power, he hath alſo given ſome principles of action, for the direction of that power to the end for which it was intended.

It is evident that, in the conſtitution of man, there are various principles of action ſuited to our ſtate and ſituation. A particular conſideration of theſe is the ſubject of the next Eſſay; in this we are only to conſider them in general, with a view to examine the relation they bear to volition, and how it is influenced by them.

CHAP. II.

Of the Influence of Incitements and Motives upon the Will.

WE come into the world ignorant of every thing, yet we muſt do many things in order to our ſubſiſtence and well-being. A new-born child may be carried in arms, and kept warm by his nurſe; but he muſt ſuck and ſwallow his food for himſelf. And this muſt be done before he has any conception of ſucking or ſwallowing, or of the manner in which they are to be performed. He is led by nature to do theſe actions without knowing for what end, or what he is about. This we call *inſtinct*.

In many caſes there is no time for voluntary determination. The motions muſt go on ſo rapidly, that the conception and volition of every movement

movement cannot keep pace with them. In ſome caſes of this kind, inſtinct, in others habit, comes in to our aid.

When a man ſtumbles and loſes his balance, the motion neceſſary to prevent his fall would come too late, if it were the conſequence of thinking what is fit to be done, and making a voluntary effort for that purpoſe. He does this inſtinctively.

When a man beats a drum or plays a tune, he has not time to direct every particular beat or ſtop, by a voluntary determination; but the habit which may be acquired by exerciſe, anſwers the purpoſe as well.

By inſtinct therefore, and by habit, we do many things without any exerciſe either of judgment or will.

In other actions the will is exerted, but without judgment.

Suppoſe a man to know that, in order to live, he muſt eat. What ſhall he eat? How much? And how often? His reaſon can anſwer none of theſe queſtions; and therefore can give no direction how he ſhould determine. Here again Nature, as an indulgent parent, ſupplies the defects of his reaſon; giving him appetite, which ſhews him when he is to eat, how often, and how much; and taſte, which informs him what he is, and what he is not to eat. And by theſe principles he is much better directed than he could

be without them, by all the knowledge he can acquire.

As the Author of Nature has given us ſome principles of action to ſupply the defects of our knowledge, he has given others to ſupply the defects of our wiſdom and virtue.

The natural deſires, affections and paſſions, which are common to the wiſe and to the fooliſh, to the virtuous and to the vicious, and even to the more ſagacious brutes, ſerve very often to direct the courſe of human actions. By theſe principles men may perform the moſt laborious duties of life, without any regard to duty; and do what is proper to be done, without regard to propriety; like a veſſel that is carried on in her proper courſe by a proſperous gale, without the ſkill or judgment of thoſe that are aboard.

Appetite, affection, or paſſion, give an impulſe to a certain action. In this impulſe there is no judgment implied. It may be weak or ſtrong; we can even conceive it irreſiſtible. In the caſe of madneſs it is ſo. Madmen have their appetites and paſſions; but they want the power of ſelf-government; and therefore we do not impute their actions to the man, but to the diſeaſe.

In actions that proceed from appetite or paſſion, we are paſſive in part, and only in part active. They are therefore partly imputed to the paſſion; and if it is ſuppoſed to be irreſiſtible, we do not impute them to the man at all.

Even

Even an American ſavage judges in this manner: When in a fit of drunkenneſs he kills his friend: As ſoon as he comes to himſelf, he is very ſorry for what he has done; but pleads, that drink, and not he, was the cauſe.

We conceive brute-animals to have no ſuperior principle to control their appetites and paſſions. On this account, their actions are not ſubject to law. Men are in a like ſtate in infancy, in madneſs, and in the delirium of a fever. They have appetites and paſſions, but they want that which makes them moral agents, accountable for their conduct, and objects of moral approbation or of blame.

In ſome caſes, a ſtronger impulſe of appetite or paſſion may oppoſe a weaker. Here alſo there may be determination and action without judgment.

Suppoſe a ſoldier ordered to mount a breach, and certain of preſent death if he retreats, this man needs not courage to go on, fear is ſufficient. The certainty of preſent death if he retreats, is an overbalance to the probability of being killed if he goes on. The man is puſhed by contrary forces, and it requires neither judgment nor exertion to yield to the ſtrongeſt.

A hungry dog acts by the ſame principle, if meat is ſet before him, with a threatening to beat him if he touch it. Hunger puſhes him forward, fear puſhes him back with more force, and the ſtrongeſt force prevails.

Thus we ſee, that, in many even of our volun-

tary actions, we may act from the impulse of appetite, affection, or passion, without any exercise of judgment, and much in the same manner as brute-animals seem to act.

Sometimes, however, there is a calm in the mind from the gales of passion or appetite, and the man is left to work his way, in the voyage of life, without those impulses which they give. Then he calmly weighs goods and evils, which are at too great a distance to excite any passion. He judges what is best upon the whole, without feeling any bias drawing him to one side. He judges for himself as he would do for another in his situation; and the determination is wholly imputable to the man, and not in any degree to his passion.

Every man come to years of understanding, who has given any attention to his own conduct, and to that of others, has, in his mind, a scale or measure of goods and evils, more or less exact. He makes an estimate of the value of health, of reputation, of riches, of pleasure, of virtue, of self-approbation, and of the approbation of his Maker. These things, and their contraries, have a comparative importance in his cool and deliberate judgment.

When a man considers whether health ought to be preferred to bodily strength, fame to riches, whether a good conscience and the approbation of his Maker, to every thing that can come in competition with it; this appears to me to be an exercise

exerciſe of judgment, and not any impulſe of paſſion or appetite.

Every thing worthy of purſuit, muſt be ſo, either intrinſically, and upon its own account, or as the means of procuring ſomething that is intrinſically valuable. That it is by judgment that we diſcern the fitneſs of means for attaining an end, is ſelf-evident; and in this, I think, all Philoſophers agree. But that it is the office of judgment to appreciate the value of an end, or the preference due to one end above another, is not granted by ſome Philoſophers.

In determining what is good or ill, and, of different goods, which is beſt, they think we muſt be guided, not by judgment, but by ſome natural or acquired taſte, which makes us reliſh one thing and diſlike another.

Thus, if one man prefers cheeſe to lobſters, another lobſters to cheeſe, it is vain, ſay they, to apply judgment to determine which is right. In like manner, if one man prefers pleaſure to virtue, another virtue to pleaſure, this is a matter of taſte, judgment has nothing to do in it. This ſeems to be the opinion of ſome Philoſophers.

I cannot help being of a contrary opinion: I think we may form a judgment, both in the queſtion about cheeſe and lobſters, and in the more important queſtion about pleaſure and virtue.

When one man feels a more agreeable reliſh in cheeſe, another in lobſters, this, I grant, requires no judgmen ; it depends only upon the

conſtitution of the palate. But, if we would determine which of the two has the beſt taſte, I think the queſtion muſt be determined by judgment; and that, with a ſmall ſhare of this faculty, we may give a very certain determination, to wit, that the two taſtes are equally good, and that both of the perſons do equally well, in preferring what ſuits their palate and their ſtomach.

Nay, I apprehend, that the two perſons who differ in their taſte will, notwithſtanding that difference, agree perfectly in their judgment, that both taſtes are upon a footing of equality, and that neither has a juſt claim to preference.

Thus it appears, that, in this inſtance, the office of taſte is very different from that of judgment; and that men, who differ moſt in taſte, may agree perfectly in their judgment, even with reſpect to the taſtes wherein they differ.

To make the other caſe parallel with this, it muſt be ſuppoſed, that the man of pleaſure and the man of virtue agree in their judgment, and that neither ſees any reaſon to prefer the one courſe of life to the other.

If this be ſuppoſed, I ſhall grant, that neither of theſe perſons has reaſon to condemn the other. Each chooſes according to his taſte, in matters which his beſt judgment determines to be perfectly indifferent.

But it is to be obſerved, that this ſuppoſition cannot have place, when we ſpeak of men, or indeed of moral agents. The man who is incapable

capable of perceiving the obligation of virtue, when he uſes his beſt judgment, is a man in name, but not in reality. He is incapable either of virtue or vice, and is not a moral agent.

Even the man of pleaſure, when his judgment is unbiaſſed, ſees, that there are certain things which a man ought not to do, though he ſhould have a taſte for them. If a thief breaks into his houſe and carries off his goods, he is perfectly convinced that he did wrong and deſerves puniſhment, although he had as ſtrong a reliſh for the goods as he himſelf has for the pleaſures he purſues.

It is evident, that mankind, in all ages, have conceived two parts in the human conſtitution, that may have influence upon our voluntary actions. Theſe we call by the general names of *paſſion* and *reaſon;* and we ſhall find, in all languages, names that are equivalent.

Under the former, we comprehend various principles of action, ſimilar to thoſe we obſerve in brute-animals, and in men who have not the uſe of reaſon. *Appetites, affections, paſſions,* are the names by which they are denominated; and theſe names are not ſo accurately diſtinguiſhed in common language, but that they are uſed ſomewhat promiſcuouſly. This, however, is common to them all, that they draw a man toward a certain object, without any farther view, by a kind of violence; a violence which

which indeed may be reſiſted if the man is maſter of himſelf, but cannot be reſiſted without a ſtruggle.

CICERO's phraſe for expreſſing their influence is, "Hominem huc et illuc rapiunt." Dr HUTCHESON uſes a ſimilar phraſe, "Quibus agitatur "mens et bruto quodam impetu fertur." There is no exerciſe of reaſon or judgment neceſſary in order to feel their influence.

With regard to this part of the human conſtitution, I ſee no difference between the vulgar and Philoſophers.

As to the other part of our conſtitution, which is commonly called *reaſon*, as oppoſed to paſſion, there have been very ſubtile diſputes among modern Philoſophers, whether it ought to be called reaſon, or be not rather ſome internal ſenſe or taſte.

Whether it ought to be called reaſon, or by what other name, I do not here inquire, but what kind of influence it has upon our voluntary actions.

As to this point, I think, all men muſt allow that this is the manly part of our conſtitution, the other the brute part. This operates in a calm and diſpaſſionate manner; a manner ſo like to judgment or reaſon, that even thoſe who do not allow it to be called by that name, endeavour to account for its having always had the name; becauſe, in the manner of its operation, it has a ſimilitude to reaſon.

As

As the ſimilitude between this principle and reaſon has led mankind to give it that name, ſo the diſſimilitude between it and paſſion has led them to ſet the two in oppoſition. They have conſidered this cool principle, as having an influence upon our actions ſo different from paſſion, that what a man does coolly and deliberately, without paſſion, is imputed ſolely to the man, whether it have merit or demerit; whereas, what he does from paſſion is imputed in part to the paſſion. If the paſſion be conceived to be irreſiſtible, the action is imputed ſolely to it, and not at all to the man. If he had power to reſiſt, and ought to have reſiſted, we blame him for not doing his duty; but, in proportion to the violence of the paſſion, the fault is alleviated.

By this cool principle, we judge what ends are moſt worthy to be purſued, how far every appetite and paſſion may be indulged, and when it ought to be reſiſted.

It directs us, not only to reſiſt the impulſe of paſſion when it would lead us wrong, but to avoid the occaſions of inflaming it; like CYRUS, who refuſed to ſee the beautiful captive princeſs. In this he acted the part both of a wiſe and a good man; firm in the love of virtue, and, at the ſame time, conſcious of the weakneſs of human nature, and unwilling to put it to too ſevere a trial. In this caſe, the youth of CYRUS, the incomparable beauty of his captive, and every circumſtance

circumſtance which tended to inflame his deſire, exalts the merit of his conduct in reſiſting it.

It is in ſuch actions that the ſuperiority of human nature appears, and the ſpecific difference between it and that of brutes. In them we may obſerve one paſſion combating another, and the ſtrongeſt prevailing; but we perceive no calm principle in their conſtitution, that is ſuperior to every paſſion, and able to give law to it.

The difference between theſe two parts of our conſtitution may be farther illuſtrated by an inſtance or two wherein paſſion prevails.

If a man, upon great provocation, ſtrike another when he ought to keep the peace, he blames himſelf for what he did, and acknowledges that he ought not to have yielded to his paſſion. Every other perſon agrees with his ſober judgment. They think he did wrong in yielding to his paſſion, when he might and ought to have reſiſted its impulſe. If they thought it impoſſible to bear the provocation, they would not blame him at all; but believing that it was in his power, and was his duty, they impute to him ſome degree of blame, acknowledging, at the ſame time, that it is alleviated in proportion to the provocation; ſo that the treſpaſs is imputed, partly to the man, and partly to the paſſion. But, if a man deliberately conceives a deſign of miſchief againſt his neighbour, contrives the means, and executes it, the action admits of no alleviation,

alleviation, it is perfectly voluntary, and he bears the whole guilt of the evil intended and done.

If a man, by the agony of the rack, is made to diſcloſe a ſecret of importance, with which he is intruſted, we pity him more than we blame him. We conſider, that ſuch is the weakneſs of human nature, that the reſolution, even of a good man, might be overcome by ſuch a trial. But if he have ſtrength of mind, which even the agony of the rack could not ſubdue, we admire his fortitude as truly heroical.

Thus, I think, it appears, that the common ſenſe of men (which, in matters of common life, ought to have great authority) has led them to diſtinguiſh two parts in the human conſtitution, which have influence upon our voluntary determinations. There is an irrational part, common to us with brute-animals, conſiſting of appetites, affections and paſſions, and there is a cool and rational part. The firſt, in many caſes, gives a ſtrong impulſe, but without judgment, and without authority. The ſecond is always accompanied with authority. All wiſdom and virtue conſiſt in following its dictates; all vice and folly in diſobeying them. We may reſiſt the impulſes of appetite and paſſion, not only without regret, but with ſelf-applauſe and triumph; but the calls of reaſon and duty can never be reſiſted, without remorſe and ſelf-condemnation.

The ancient Philoſophers agreed with the vulgar, in making this diſtinction of the priciples of action. The irrational part the Greeks called

led ὁρμη. CICERO calls it *appetitus*, taking that word in an extenſive ſenſe, ſo as to include every propenſity to action which is not grounded on judgment.

The other principle the Greeks called νους; PLATO calls it the ἡγεμονικον, or leading principle. "*Duplex enim eſt vis animorum atque naturæ*," ſays CICERO, "*una pars in appetitu poſita eſt, quæ eſt ὁρμη Græcè, quæ hominem huc et illuc rapit; altera in ratione, quæ docet, et explanat, quid faciendum fugiendumve ſit; ita fit ut ratio præſit, appetitus obtemperet.*"

The reaſon of explaining this diſtinction here is, that theſe two principles influence the will in different ways. Their influence differs, not in degree only, but in kind. This difference we feel, though it may be difficult to find words to expreſs it. We may perhaps more eaſily form a notion of it by a ſimilitude.

It is one thing to puſh a man from one part of the room to another; it is a thing of a very different nature to uſe arguments to perſuade him to leave his place, and go to another. He may yield to the force which puſhes him, without any exerciſe of his rational faculties; nay, he muſt yield to it, if he do not oppoſe an equal or a greater force. His liberty is impaired in ſome degree; and, if he has not power ſufficient to oppoſe, his liberty is quite taken away, and the motion cannot be imputed to him at all. The influence of appetite or paſſion ſeems to me to be very

very like to this. If the paſſion be ſuppoſed irreſiſtible, we impute the action to it ſolely, and not to the man. If he had power to reſiſt, but yields after a ſtruggle, we impute the action, partly to the man, and partly to the paſſion.

If we attend to the other caſe, when the man is only urged by arguments to leave his place, this reſembles the operation of the cool or rational principle. It is evident, that, whether he yields to the arguments or not, the determination is wholly his own act, and is entirely to be imputed to him. Arguments, whatever be the degree of their ſtrength, diminiſh not a man's liberty; they may produce a cool conviction of what we ought to do, and they can do no more. But appetite and paſſion give an impulſe to act and impair liberty, in proportion to their ſtrength.

With moſt men, the impulſe of paſſion is more effectual than bare conviction; and, on this account, orators, who would perſuade, find it neceſſary to addreſs the paſſions, as well as to convince the underſtanding; and, in all ſyſtems of rhetoric, theſe two have been conſidered as different intentions of the orator, and to be accompliſhed by different means.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of Operations of Mind which may be called Voluntary.

THE faculties of underſtanding and will are eaſily diſtinguiſhed in thought, but very rarely, if ever, disjoined in operation.

In moſt, perhaps in all the operations of mind for which we have names in language, both faculties are employed, and we are both intellective and active.

Whether it be poſſible that intelligence may exiſt without ſome degree of activity, or impoſſible, is perhaps beyond the reach of our faculties to determine; but, I apprehend, that, in fact, they are always conjoined in the operations of our minds.

It is probable, I think, that there is ſome degree of activity in thoſe operations which we refer to the underſtanding; accordingly, they have always, and in all languages, been expreſſed by active verbs; as, I ſee, I hear, I remember, I apprehend, I judge, I reaſon. And it is certain, that every act of will muſt be accompanied by ſome operation of the underſtanding; for he that wills muſt apprehend what he wills, and apprehenſion belongs to the underſtanding.

The operations I am to conſider in this chapter, I think, have commonly been referred to the underſtanding;

underſtanding; but we ſhall find that the will has ſo great a ſhare in them, that they may, with propriety, be called *voluntary*. They are theſe three, *attention*, *deliberation*, and *fixed purpoſe* or *reſolution*.

Attention may be given to any object, either of ſenſe or of intellect, in order to form a diſtinct notion of it, or to diſcover its nature, its attributes, or its relations. And ſo great is the effect of attention, that, without it, it is impoſſible to acquire or retain a diſtinct notion of any object of thought.

If a man hear a diſcourſe without attention, what does he carry away with him? If he ſee St Peter's or the Vatican without attention, What account can he give of it? While two perſons are engaged in intereſting diſcourſe, the clock ſtrikes within their hearing, to which they give no attention, What is the conſequence? The next minute they know not whether the clock ſtruck or not. Yet their ears were not ſhut. The uſual impreſſion was made upon the organ of hearing, and upon the auditory nerve and brain; but from inattention the ſound either was not perceived, or paſſed in the twinkling of an eye, without leaving the leaſt veſtige in the memory.

A man ſees not what is before his eyes when his mind is occupied about another object. In the tumult of a battle a man may be ſhot through the body without knowing any thing of the mat-

ter; till he diſcover it by the loſs of blood or of ſtrength.

The moſt acute ſenſation of pain may be deadened, if the attention can be vigorouſly directed to another object. A gentleman of my acquaintance, in the agony of a fit of the gout, uſed to call for the cheſs-board. As he was fond of that game, he acknowledged that, as the game advanced and drew his attention, the ſenſe of pain abated, and the time ſeemed much ſhorter.

ARCHIMEDES, it is ſaid, being intent upon a mathematical propoſition, when Syracuſe was taken by the Romans, knew not the calamity of the city, till a Roman ſoldier broke in upon his retirement, and gave him a deadly wound; on which he lamented only that he had loſt a fine demonſtration.

It is needleſs to multiply inſtances to ſhew, that when one faculty of the mind is intenſely engaged about any object, the other faculties are laid as it were faſt aſleep.

It may be farther obſerved, that if there be any thing that can be called *genius* in matters of mere judgment and reaſoning, it ſeems to conſiſt chiefly in being able to give that attention to the ſubject which keeps it ſteady in the mind, till we can ſurvey it accurately on all ſides.

There is a talent of imagination, which bounds from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth in a moment. This may be favourable to wit and imagery; but the powers of judging and

and reaſoning depend chiefly upon keeping the mind to a clear and ſteady view of the ſubject.

Sir ISAAC NEWTON, to one who complimented him upon the force of genius, which had made ſuch improvements in mathematics and natural philoſophy, is ſaid to have made this reply, which was both modeſt and judicious, That, if he had made any improvements in thoſe ſciences, it was owing more to patient attention than to any other talent.

Whatever be the effects which attention may produce, (and I apprehend they are far beyond what is commonly believed), it is for the moſt part in our power.

Every man knows that he can turn his attention to this ſubject or to that, for a longer or a ſhorter time, and with more or leſs intenſeneſs, as he pleaſes. It is a voluntary act, and depends upon his will.

But what was before obſerved of the will in general, is applicable to this particular exertion of it, That the mind is rarely in a ſtate of indifference, left to turn its attention to the object which to reaſon appears moſt deſerving of it. There is, for the moſt part, a bias to ſome particular object, more than to any other; and this not from any judgment of its deſerving our attention more, but from ſome impulſe or propenſity, grounded on nature or habit.

It is well known that things new and uncommon, things grand, and things that are beautiful,

draw our attention, not in proportion to the intereſt we have, or think we have in them, but in a much greater proportion.

Whatever moves our paſſions or affections draws our attention, very often, more than we wiſh.

You deſire a man not to think of an unfortunate event which torments him. It admits of no remedy. The thought of it anſwers no purpoſe but to keep the wound bleeding. He is perfectly convinced of all you ſay. He knows that he would not feel the affliction, if he could only not think of it; yet he hardly thinks of any thing elſe. Strange! when happineſs and miſery ſtand before him, and depend upon his choice, he chooſes miſery, and rejects happineſs with his eyes open!

Yet he wiſhes to be happy, as all men do. How ſhall we reconcile this contradiction between his judgment and his conduct?

The account of it ſeems to me to be this: The afflicting event draws his attention ſo ſtrongly, by a natural and blind force, that he either hath not the power, or hath not the vigour of mind to reſiſt its impulſe, though he knows that to yield to it is miſery, without any good to balance it.

Acute bodily pain draws our attention, and makes it very difficult to attend to any thing elſe, even when attention to the pain ſerves no other purpoſe but to aggravate it tenfold.

The

The man who played a game at chefs in the agony of the gout, to engage his attention to another object, acted the reafonable part, and conſulted his real happineſs; but it required a great effort to give that attention to his game, which was neceſſary to produce the effect intended by it.

Even when there is no particular object that draws away our attention, there is a deſultorineſs of thought in man, and in ſome more than in others, which makes it very difficult to give that fixed attention to important objects which reaſon requires.

It appears, I think, from what has been ſaid, that the attention we give to objects, is for the moſt part voluntary: That a great part of wiſdom and virtue conſiſts in giving a proper direction to our attention; and that however reaſonable this appears to the judgment of every man, yet, in ſome caſes, it requires an effort of ſelf-command no leſs than the moſt heroic virtues.

Another operation that may be called *voluntary*, is deliberation about what we are to do or to forbear.

Every man knows that it is in his power to deliberate or not to deliberate about any part of his conduct; to deliberate for a ſhorter, or a longer time, more careleſsly, or more ſeriouſly: And when he has reaſon to ſuſpect that his affection may bias his judgment, he may either honeſtly uſe the beſt means in his power to form an

impartial judgment, or he may yield to his bias, and only ſeek arguments to juſtify what inclination leads him to do. In all theſe points, he determines, he wills, the right or the wrong.

The general rules of deliberation are perfectly evident to reaſon when we conſider them abſtractly. They are axioms in morals.

We ought not to deliberate in caſes that are perfectly clear. No man deliberates whether he ought to chooſe happineſs or miſery. No honeſt man deliberates whether he ſhall ſteal his neighbour's property. When the caſe is not clear, when it is of importance, and when there is time for deliberation, we ought to deliberate with more or leſs care, in proportion to the importance of the action. In deliberation we ought to weigh things in an even balance, and to allow to every conſideration the weight which, in ſober judgment, we think it ought to have, and no more. This is to deliberate impartially. Our deliberation ſhould be brought to an iſſue in due time, ſo that we may not loſe the opportunity of acting while we deliberate.

The axioms of Euclid do not appear to me to have a greater degree of ſelf-evidence, than theſe rules of deliberation. And as far as a man acts according to them, his heart approves of him, and he has confidence of the approbation of the Searcher of hearts.

But though the manner in which we ought to deliberate be evident to reaſon, it is not always

eaſy

eaſy to follow it. Our appetites, our affections and paſſions, oppoſe all deliberation, but that which is employed in finding the means of their gratification. Avarice may lead to deliberate upon the ways of making money, but it does not diſtinguiſh between the honeſt and the diſhoneſt.

We ought ſurely to deliberate how far every appetite and paſſion may be indulged, and what limits ſhould be ſet to it. But our appetites and paſſions puſh us on to the attainment of their objects, in the ſhorteſt road, and without delay.

Thus it happens, that, if we yield to their impulſe, we ſhall often tranſgreſs thoſe rules of deliberation, which reaſon approves. In this conflict between the dictates of reaſon, and the blind impulſe of paſſion, we muſt voluntarily determine. When we take part with our reaſon, though in oppoſition to paſſion, we approve of our own conduct.

What we call a fault of ignorance, is always owing to the want of due deliberation. When we do not take due pains to be rightly informed, there is a fault, not indeed in acting according to the light we have, but in not uſing the proper means to get light. For if we judge wrong, after uſing the proper means of information, there is no fault in acting according to that wrong judgment; the error is invincible.

The natural conſequence of deliberation on any part of our conduct, is a determination how

we ſhall act; and if it is not brought to this iſſue it is loſt labour.

There are two caſes in which a determination may take place; when the opportunity of putting it in execution is preſent, and when it is at a diſtance.

When the opportunity is preſent, the determination to act is immediately followed by the action. Thus, if a man determine to riſe and walk, he immediately does it, unleſs he is hindered by force, or has loſt the power of walking. And if he ſit ſtill when he has power to walk, we conclude infallibly that he has not determined, or willed to walk immediately.

Our determination or will to act, is not always the reſult of deliberation, it may be the effect of ſome paſſion or appetite, without any judgment interpoſed. And when judgment is interpoſed, we may determine and act either according to that judgment or contrary to it.

When a man ſits down hungry to dine, he eats from appetite, very often without exerciſing his judgment at all; Nature invites and he obeys the call, as the ox, or the horſe, or as an infant does.

When we converſe with perſons whom we love or reſpect, we ſay and do civil things merely from affection or from reſpect. They flow ſpontaneouſly from the heart, without requiring any judgment. In ſuch caſes we act as brute-animals do, or as children before the uſe of reaſon,

ſon. We feel an impulſe in our nature, and we yield to it.

When a man eats merely from appetite, he does not conſider the pleaſure of eating, or its tendency to health. Theſe conſiderations are not in his thoughts. But we can ſuppoſe a man who eats with a view to enjoy the pleaſure of eating. Such a man reaſons and judges. He will take care to uſe the proper means of procuring an appetite. He will be a critic in taſtes, and make nice diſcriminations. This man uſes his rational faculties even in eating. And however contemptible this application of them may be, it is an exerciſe of which, I apprehend, brute-animals are not capable.

In like manner, a man may ſay or do civil things to another, not from affection, but in order to ſerve ſome end by it, or becauſe he thinks it his duty.

To act with a view to ſome diſtant intereſt, or to act from a ſenſe of duty, ſeems to be proper to man as a reaſonable being; but to act merely from paſſion, from appetite, or from affection, is common to him with the brute-animals. In the laſt caſe there is no judgment required, but in the firſt there is.

To act againſt what one judges to be for his real good upon the whole, is folly. To act againſt what he judges to be his duty, is immorality. It cannot be denied, that there are too many inſtances of both in human life. *Video meliora proboque,*

proboque, deteriora ſequor, is neither an impoſſible, nor an unfrequent caſe.

While a man does what he really thinks wiſeſt and beſt to be done, the more his appetites, his affections and paſſions draw him the contrary way, the more he approves of his own conduct, and the more he is entitled to the approbation of every rational being.

The *third* operation of mind I mentioned, which may be called voluntary, is, A fixed purpoſe or reſolution with regard to our future conduct.

This naturally takes place, when any action, or courſe of action, about which we have deliberated, is not immediately to be executed, the occaſion of acting being at ſome diſtance.

A fixed purpoſe to do, ſome time hence, ſomething which we believe ſhall then be in our power, is ſtrictly and properly a determination of will, no leſs than a determination to do it inſtantly. Every definition of volition agrees to it. Whether the opportunity of doing what we have determined to do be preſent or at ſome diſtance, is an accidental circumſtance which does not affect the nature of the determination, and no good reaſon can be aſſigned why it ſhould not be called *volition* in the one caſe, as well as in the other. A purpoſe or reſolution, therefore, is truly and properly an act of will.

Our purpoſes are of two kinds. We may call the one *particular*, the other *general*. By a *particular*

ticular purpoſe, I mean that which has for its object an individual action, limited to one time and place; by a *general* purpoſe, that of a courſe or train of action, intended for ſome general end, or regulated by ſome general rule.

Thus, I may purpoſe to go to London next winter. When the time comes, I execute my purpoſe, if I continue of the ſame mind; and the purpoſe, when executed, is no more. Thus it is with every particular purpoſe.

A general purpoſe may continue for life; and, after many particular actions have been done in conſequence of it, may remain and regulate future actions.

Thus, a young man propoſes to follow the profeſſion of law, of medicine, or of theology. This general purpoſe directs the courſe of his reading and ſtudy. It directs him in the choice of his company and companions, and even of his diverſions. It determines his travels and the place of his abode. It has influence upon his dreſs and manners, and a conſiderable effect in forming his character.

There are other fixed purpoſes which have a ſtill greater effect in forming the character. I mean ſuch as regard our moral conduct.

Suppoſe a man to have exerciſed his intellectual and moral faculties, ſo far as to have diſtinct notions of juſtice and injuſtice, and of the conſequences of both, and, after due deliberation, to have formed a fixed purpoſe to adhere inflexibly

bly to juſtice, and never to handle the wages of iniquity.

Is not this the man whom we ſhould call a juſt man? We conſider the moral virtues as inherent in the mind of a good man, even when there is no opportunity of exerciſing them. And what is it in the mind which we can call the virtue of juſtice, when it is not exerciſed? It can be nothing but a fixed purpoſe, or determination, to act according to the rules of juſtice, when there is opportunity.

The Roman law defined juſtice, *A ſteady and perpetual will to give to every man his due.* When the opportunity of doing juſtice is not preſent, this can mean nothing elſe than a ſteady purpoſe, which is very properly called will. Such a purpoſe, if it is ſteady, will infallibly produce juſt conduct; for every known tranſgreſſion of juſtice demonſtrates a change of purpoſe, at leaſt for that time.

What has been ſaid of juſtice, may be ſo eaſily applied to every other moral virtue, that it is unneceſſary to give inſtances. They are all fixed purpoſes of acting according to a certain rule.

By this, the virtues may be eaſily diſtinguiſhed, in thought at leaſt, from natural affections that bear the ſame name. Thus, benevolence is a capital virtue, which, though not ſo neceſſary to the being of ſociety, is entitled to a higher degree of approbation than even juſtice. But there is a natural affection of benevolence, common

mon to good and bad men, to the virtuous and to the vicious. How ſhall theſe be diſtinguiſhed?

In practice, indeed, we cannot diſtinguiſh them in other men, and with difficulty in ourſelves; but in theory, nothing is more eaſy. The virtue of benevolence is a fixed purpoſe or reſolution to do good when we have opportunity, from a conviction that it is right, and is our duty. The affection of benevolence is a propenſity to do good, from natural conſtitution or habit, without regard to rectitude or duty.

There are good tempers and bad, which are a part of the conſtitution of the man, and are really involuntary, though they often lead to voluntary actions. A good natural temper is not virtue, nor is a bad one vice. Hard would it be indeed to think, that a man ſhould be born under a decree of reprobation, becauſe he has the misfortune of a bad natural temper.

The Phyſiognomiſt ſaw, in the features of SOCRATES, the ſignatures of many bad diſpoſitions, which that good man acknowledged he felt within him; but the triumph of his virtue was the greater in having conquered them.

In men who have no fixed rules of conduct, no ſelf-government, the natural temper is variable by numberleſs accidents. The man who is full of affection and benevolence this hour, when a croſs accident happens to ruffle him, or perhaps when an eaſterly wind blows, feels a ſtrange revolution in his temper. The kind and benevolent

benevolent affections give place to the jealous and malignant, which are as readily indulged in their turn, and for the ſame reaſon, becauſe he feels a propenſity to indulge them.

We may obſerve, that men who have exerciſed their rational powers, are generally governed in their opinions by fixed principles of belief; and men who have made the greateſt advance in ſelf-government, are governed, in their practice, by general fixed purpoſes. Without the former, there would be no ſteadineſs and conſiſtence in our belief; nor without the latter, in our conduct.

When a man is come to years of underſtanding; from his education, from his company, or from his ſtudy, he forms to himſelf a ſet of general principles, a creed, which governs his judgment in particular points that occur.

If new evidence be laid before him which tends to overthrow any of his received principles, it requires in him a great degree of candour and love of truth, to give it an impartial examination, and to form a new judgment. Moſt men, when they are fixed in their principles, upon what they account ſufficient evidence, can hardly be drawn into a new and ſerious examination of them.

They get a habit of believing them, which is ſtrengthened by repeated acts, and remains immoveable, even when the evidence upon which their belief was at firſt grounded, is forgot.

It

It is this that makes converſions, either from religious or political principles, ſo difficult.

A mere prejudice of education ſticks faſt, as a propoſition of EUCLID does with a man who hath long ago forgot the proof. Both indeed are upon a ſimilar footing. We reſt in both, becauſe we have long done ſo, and think we received them at firſt upon good evidence, though that evidence be quite forgot.

When we know a man's principles, we judge by them, rather than by the degree of his underſtanding, how he will determine in any point which is connected with them.

Thus, the judgment of moſt men who judge for themſelves is governed by fixed principles; and, I apprehend, that the conduct of moſt men who have any ſelf-government, and any conſiſtency of conduct, is governed by fixed purpoſes.

A man of breeding may, in his natural temper, be proud, paſſionate, revengeful, and in his morals a very bad man; yet, in good company, he can ſtifle every paſſion that is inconſiſtent with good breeding, and be humane, modeſt, complaiſant, even to thoſe whom in his heart he deſpiſes or hates. Why is this man, who can command all his paſſions before company, a ſlave to them in private? The reaſon is plain: He has a fixed reſolution to be a man of breeding, but hath no ſuch reſolution to be a man of virtue. He hath combated his moſt violent paſſions a thouſand times before he became maſter of them

in

in company. The ſame reſolution and perſeverance would have given him the command of them when alone.

A fixed reſolution retains its influence upon the conduct, even when the motives to it are not in view, in the ſame manner as a fixed principle retains its influence upon the belief, when the evidence of it is forgot. The former may be called a habit of the *will*, the latter a habit of the *underſtanding*. By ſuch habits chiefly, men are governed in their opinions, and in their practice.

A man who has no general fixed purpoſes, may be ſaid, as POPE ſays of moſt women, (I hope unjuſtly) to have no character at all. He will be honeſt or diſhoneſt, benevolent or malicious, compaſſionate or cruel, as the tide of his paſſions and affections drives him. This, however, I believe, is the caſe of but a few in advanced life, and theſe, with regard to conduct, the weakeſt and moſt contemptible of the ſpecies.

A man of ſome conſtancy may change his general purpoſes once or twice in life, ſeldom more. From the purſuit of pleaſure in early life, he may change to that of ambition, and from ambition to avarice. But every man who uſes his reaſon in the conduct of life, will have ſome end, to which he gives a preference above all others. To this he ſteers his courſe; his projects and his actions will be regulated by it. Without this, there

there would be no conſiſtency in his conduct. He would be like a ſhip in the ocean, which is bound to no port, under no government, but left to the mercy of winds and tides.

We obſerved before, that there are moral rules reſpecting the attention we ought to give to objects and reſpecting our deliberations, which are no leſs evident than mathematical axioms. The ſame thing may be obſerved with reſpect to our fixed purpoſes, whether particular or general.

Is it not ſelf-evident, that, after due deliberation, we ought to reſolve upon that conduct, or that courſe of conduct, which, to our ſober judgment, appears to be beſt and moſt approvable? That we ought to be firm and ſteady in adhering to ſuch reſolutions, while we are perſuaded that they are right; but open to conviction, and ready to change our courſe, when we have good evidence that it is wrong;

Fickleneſs, inconſtancy, facility, on the one hand, wilfulneſs, inflexibility, and obſtinacy, on the other, are moral qualities, reſpecting our purpoſes, which every one ſees to be wrong. A manly firmneſs, grounded upon rational conviction, is the proper mean which every man approves and reveres.

CHAP. IV.

Corollaries.

FROM what has been ſaid concerning the will, it appears, *firſt*, That, as ſome acts of the will are tranſient and momentary, ſo others are permanent, and may continue for a long time, or even through the whole courſe of our rational life.

When I will to ſtretch out my hand, that will is at an end as ſoon as the action is done. It is an act of the will which begins and ends in a moment. But when I will to attend to a mathematical propoſition, to examine the demonſtration and the conſequences that may be drawn from it, this will may continue for hours. It muſt continue as long as my attention continues; for no man attends to a mathematical propoſition longer than he wills.

The ſame thing may be ſaid of deliberation, with regard, either to any point of conduct, or with regard to any general courſe of conduct. We will to deliberate as long as we do deliberate; and that may be for days or for weeks.

A purpoſe or reſolution, which we have ſhewn to be an act of the will, may continue for a great part of life, or for the whole, after we are of age to form a reſolution.

Thus,

Thus, a merchant may reſolve, that, after he has made ſuch a fortune by traffic, he will give it up, and retire to a country life. He may continue this reſolution for thirty or forty years, and execute it at laſt; but he continues it no longer than he wills, for he may at any time change his reſolution.

There are, therefore, acts of the will which are not tranſient and momentary, which may continue long, and grow into a habit. This deſerves the more to be obſerved, becauſe a very eminent Philoſopher has advanced a contrary principle, to wit, That all the acts of the will are tranſient and momentary; and from that principle has drawn very important concluſions with regard to what conſtitutes the moral character of man.

A *ſecond* corollary is, That nothing in a man, wherein the will is not concerned, can juſtly be accounted either virtuous or immoral.

That no blame can be imputed to a man for what is altogether involuntary, is ſo evident in itſelf, that no arguments can make it more evident. The practice of all criminal courts, in all enlightened nations, is founded upon it.

If it ſhould be thought an objection to this maxim, that, by the laws of all nations, children often ſuffer for the crimes of parents, in which they had no hand, the anſwer is eaſy.

For, *firſt*, Such is the connection between parents and children, that the puniſhment of a pa-

rent muſt hurt his children whether the law will or not. If a man is fined, or impriſoned; if he loſes life, or limb, or eſtate, or reputation, by the hand of juſtice, his children ſuffer by neceſſary conſequence. *Secondly*, When laws intend to appoint any puniſhment of innocent children for the father's crime, ſuch laws are either unjuſt, or they are to be conſidered as acts of police, and not of juriſprudence, and are intended as an expedient to deter parents more effectually from the commiſſion of the crime. The innocent children, in this caſe, are ſacrificed to the public good, in like manner, as, to prevent the ſpreading of the plague, the ſound are ſhut up with the infected in a houſe or ſhip, that has the infection.

By the law of England, if a man is killed by an ox goring him, or a cart running over him, though there be no fault or neglect in the owner, the ox or the cart is a *deodand*, and is confiſcated to the Church. The Legiſlature ſurely did not intend to puniſh the ox as a criminal, far leſs the cart. The intention evidently was, to inſpire the people with a ſacred regard to the life of man.

When the Parliament of Paris, with a ſimilar intention, ordained the houſe in which Ravilliac was born, to be razed to the ground, and never to be rebuilt, it would be great weakneſs to conclude, that that wiſe judicature intended to puniſh the houſe.

If

If any judicature ſhould, in any inſtance, find a man guilty, and an object of puniſhment, for what they allowed to be altogether involuntary, all the world would condemn them as men who knew nothing of the firſt and moſt fundamental rules of juſtice.

I have endeavoured to ſhew, that, in our attention to objects, in order to form a right judgment of them; in our deliberation about particular actions, or about general rules of conduct; in our purpoſes and reſolutions, as well as in the execution of them, the will has a principal ſhare. If any man could be found, who, in the whole courſe of his life, had given due attention to things that concern him, had deliberated duly and impartially about his conduct, had formed his reſolutions, and executed them according to his beſt judgment and capacity, ſurely ſuch a man might hold up his face before God and man, and plead innocence. He muſt be acquitted by the impartial Judge, whatever his natural temper was, whatever his paſſions and affections, as far as they were involuntary.

A *third* corollary is, That all virtuous habits, when we diſtinguiſh them from virtuous actions, conſiſt in fixed purpoſes of acting according to the rules of virtue, as often as we have opportunity.

We can conceive in a man a greater or a leſs degree of ſteadineſs to his purpoſes or reſolutions; but that the general tenor of his con-

duct ſhould be contrary to them, is impoſſible.

The man who has a determined reſolution to do his duty in every inſtance, and who adheres ſteadily to his reſolution, is a perfect man. The man who has a determined purpoſe of carrying on a courſe of action which he knows to be wrong, is a hardened offender. Between theſe extremes there are many intermediate degrees of virtue and vice.

ESSAY

ESSAY III.

OF THE PRINCIPLES OF ACTION.

PART I.

Of the Mechanical Principles of Action.

CHAP. I.

Of the Principles of Action in general.

IN the ſtrict philoſophical ſenſe, nothing can be called the action of a man, but what he previouſly conceived and willed or determined to do. In morals we commonly employ the word in this ſenſe, and never impute any thing to a man as his doing, in which his will was not interpoſed. But when moral imputation is not concerned, we call many things actions of the man, which he neither previouſly conceived nor willed. Hence the actions of men have been diſtinguiſhed into three claſſes, the voluntary, the involuntary, and the mixed. By the laſt are meant ſuch actions as are under the command of the will, but are commonly performed without any interpoſition of will.

We cannot avoid uſing the word *action* in this popular ſenſe, without deviating too much from

the common uſe of language; and it is in this ſenſe we uſe it when we inquire into the principles of action in the human mind.

By *principles* of action, I underſtand every thing that incites us to act.

If there were no incitements to action, active power would be given us in vain. Having no motive to direct our active exertions, the mind would, in all caſes, be in a ſtate of perfect indifference, to do this or that, or nothing at all. The active power would either not be exerted at all, or its exertions would be perfectly unmeaning and frivolous, neither wiſe nor fooliſh, neither good nor bad. To every action that is of the ſmalleſt importance, there muſt be ſome incitement, ſome motive, ſome reaſon.

It is therefore a moſt important part of the philoſophy of the human mind, to have a diſtinct and juſt view of the various principles of action, which the Author of our being hath planted in our nature, to arrange them properly, and to aſſign to every one its rank.

By this it is, that we may diſcover the end of our being, and the part which is aſſigned us upon the theatre of life. In this part of the human conſtitution, the nobleſt work of God that falls within our notice, we may diſcern moſt clearly the character of him who made us, and how he would have us to employ that active power which he hath given us.

I cannot without great diffidence enter upon this ſubject, obſerving that almoſt every author of reputation, who has given attention to it, has a ſyſtem of his own; and that no man has been ſo happy as to give general ſatisfaction to thoſe who came after him.

There is a branch of knowledge much valued, and very juſtly, which we call knowledge of the world, knowledge of mankind, knowledge of human nature: This, I think, conſiſts in knowing from what principles men generally act; and it is commonly the fruit of natural ſagacity joined with experience.

A man of ſagacity, who has had occaſion to deal in intereſting matters, with a great variety of perſons of different age, ſex, rank and profeſſion, learns to judge what may be expected from men in given circumſtances; and how they may be moſt effectually induced to act the part which he deſires. To know this is of ſo great importance to men in active life, that it is called knowing men, and knowing human nature.

This knowledge may be of conſiderable uſe to a man who would ſpeculate upon the ſubject we have propoſed, but is not, by itſelf, ſufficient for that purpoſe.

The man of the world conjectures, perhaps with great probability, how a man will act in certain given circumſtances; and this is all he wants to know. To enter into a detail of the various principles which influence the actions of men,

men, to give them diſtinct names, to define them, and to aſcertain their different provinces, is the buſineſs of a philoſopher, and not of a man of the world; and, indeed, it is a matter attended with great difficulty from various cauſes.

Firſt, On account of the great number of active principles that influence the actions of men.

Man has, not without reaſon, been called an epitome of the univerſe. His body, by which his mind is greatly affected, being a part of the material ſyſtem, is ſubject to all the laws of inanimate matter. During ſome part of his exiſtence, his ſtate is very like that of a vegetable. He riſes, by imperceptible degrees, to the animal, and, at laſt, to the rational life, and has the principles that belong to all.

Another cauſe of the difficulty of tracing the various principles of action in man, is, That the ſame action, nay, the ſame courſe and train of action may proceed from very different principles.

Men who are fond of a hypotheſis, commonly ſeek no other proof of its truth, but that it ſerves to account for the appearances which it is brought to explain. This is a very ſlippery kind of proof in every part of philoſophy, and never to be truſted; but leaſt of all, when the appearances to be accounted for are human actions.

Moſt actions proceed from a variety of principles concurring in their direction; and according as we are diſpoſed to judge favourably or unfavourably

unfavourably of the perſon, or of human nature in general, we impute them wholly to the beſt, or wholly to the worſt, overlooking others which had no ſmall ſhare in them.

The principles from which men act can be diſcovered only in theſe two ways; by attention to the conduct of other men, or by attention to our own conduct, and to what we feel in ourſelves. There is much uncertainty in the former, and much difficulty in the latter.

Men differ much in their characters; and we can obſerve the conduct of a few only of the ſpecies. Men differ not only from other men, but from themſelves at different times, and on different occaſions; according as they are in the company of their ſuperiors, inferiors, or equals; according as they are in the eye of ſtrangers, or of their familiars only, or in the view of no human eye; according as they are in good or bad fortune, or in good or bad humour. We ſee but a ſmall part of the actions of our moſt familiar acquaintance; and what we ſee may lead us to a probable conjecture, but can give no certain knowledge of the principles from which they act.

A man may, no doubt, know with certainty the principles from which he himſelf acts, becauſe he is conſcious of them. But this knowledge requres an attentive reflection upon the operations of his own mind, which is very rarely to be found. It is perhaps more eaſy to find a man who has formed a juſt notion of the character

racter of man in general, or of thoſe of his familiar acquaintance, than one who has a juſt notion of his own character.

Moſt men, through pride and ſelf-flattery, are apt to think themſelves better than they really are; and ſome, perhaps from melancholy, or from falſe principles of religion, are led to think themſelves worſe than they really are.

It requires, therefore, a very accurate and impartial examination of a man's own heart, to be able to form a diſtinct notion of the various principles which influence his conduct. That this is a matter of great difficulty, we may judge from the very different and contradictory ſyſtems of Philoſophers upon this ſubject, from the earlieſt ages to this day.

During the age of Greek Philoſophy, the Platoniſt, the Peripatetic, the Stoic, the Epicurean, had each his own ſyſtem. In the dark ages, the Schoolmen and the Myſtics had ſyſtems diametrically oppoſite; and, ſince the revival of learning, no controverſy hath been more keenly agitated, eſpecially among Britiſh Philoſophers, than that about the principles of action in the human conſtitution.

They have determined, to the ſatisfaction of the learned, the forces by which the planets and comets traverſe the boundleſs regions of ſpace; but have not been able to determine, with any degree of unanimity, the forces which every man

man is conſcious of in himſelf, and by which his conduct is directed.

Some admit no principle but ſelf-love; others reſolve all into love of the pleaſures of ſenſe, variouſly modified by the aſſociation of ideas; others admit diſintereſted benevolence along with ſelf-love; others reduce all to reaſon and paſſion; others to paſſion alone; nor is there leſs variety about the number and diſtribution of the paſſions.

The names we give to the various principles of action, have ſo little preciſion, even in the beſt and pureſt writers in every language, that, on this account, there is no ſmall difficulty in giving them names, and arranging them properly.

The words *appetite*, *paſſion*, *affection*, *intereſt*, *reaſon*, cannot be ſaid to have one definite ſignification. They are taken ſometimes in a larger, and ſometimes in a more limited ſenſe. The ſame principle is ſometimes called by one of thoſe names, ſometimes by another; and principles of a very different nature are often called by the ſame name.

To remedy this confuſion of names, it might perhaps ſeem proper to invent new ones. But there are ſo few entitled to this privilege, that I ſhall not lay claim to it; but ſhall endeavour to claſs the various principles of human action as diſtinctly as I am able, and to point out their ſpecific differences; giving them ſuch names as

may

may deviate from the common uſe of the words as little as poſſible.

There are ſome principles of action which require no attention, no deliberation, no will. Theſe, for diſtinction's ſake, we ſhall call *mechanical.* Another claſs we may call *animal,* as they ſeem common to man with other animals. A third claſs we may call *rational,* being proper to man as a rational creature.

CHAP. II.

Of Inſtinct.

THE mechanical principles of action may, I think, be reduced to two ſpecies, *inſtincts* and *habits.*

By inſtinct, I mean a natural blind impulſe to certain actions, without having any end in view, without deliberation, and very often without any conception of what we do.

Thus a man breathes while he is alive, by the alternate contraction and relaxation of certain muſcles, by which the cheſt, and of conſequence the lungs, are contracted and dilated. There is no reaſon to think, that an infant new-born, knows that breathing is neceſſary to life in its new ſtate, that he knows how it muſt be performed, or even that he has any thought or conception of that operation; yet he breathes as ſoon as he is born with perfect regularity, as if he had been taught, and got the habit by long practice.

By

By the ſame kind of principle, a new-born child, when its ſtomach is emptied, and nature has brought milk into the mother's breaſt, ſucks and ſwallows its food as perfectly as if it knew the principles of that operation, and had got the habit of working according to them.

Sucking and ſwallowing are very complex operations. Anatomiſts deſcribe about thirty pairs of muſcles that muſt be employed in every draught. Of thoſe muſcles, every one muſt be ſerved by its proper nerve, and can make no exertion but by ſome influence communicated by the nerve. The exertion of all thoſe muſcles and nerves is not ſimultaneous. They muſt ſucceed each other in a certain order, and their order is no leſs neceſſary than the exertion itſelf.

This regular train of operations is carried on according to the niceſt rules of art, by the infant, who has neither art, nor ſcience, nor experience, nor habit.

That the infant feels the uneaſy ſenſation of hunger, I admit; and that it ſucks no longer than till this ſenſation be removed. But who informed it that this uneaſy ſenſation might be removed, or by what means? That it knows nothing of this is evident; for it will as readily ſuck a finger, or a bit of ſtick, as the nipple.

By a like principle it is, that infants cry when they are pained or hurt; that they are afraid when left alone, eſpecially in the dark; that they ſtart when in danger of falling; that they are terrified

terrified by an angry countenance, or an angry tone of voice, and are ſoothed and comforted by a placid countenance, and by ſoft and gentle tones of voice.

In the animals we are beſt acquainted with, and which we look upon as the more perfect of the brute-creation, we ſee much the ſame inſtincts as in the human kind, or very ſimilar ones, ſuited to the particular ſtate and manner of life of the animal.

Beſides theſe, there are in brute-animals inſtincts peculiar to each tribe, by which they are fitted for defence, for offence, or for providing for themſelves, and for their offspring.

It is not more certain, that Nature hath furniſhed various animals with various weapons of offence and defence, than that the ſame nature hath taught them how to uſe them; the bull and the ram to butt, the horſe to kick, the dog to bite, the lion to uſe his paws, the boar his tuſks, the ſerpent his fangs, and the bee and waſp their ſting.

The manufactures of animals, if we may call them by that name, preſent us with a wonderful variety of inſtincts, belonging to particular ſpecies, whether of the ſocial or of the ſolitary kind; the neſts of birds, ſo ſimilar in their ſituation and architecture in the ſame kind, ſo various in different kinds; the webs of ſpiders, and of other ſpinning animals; the ball of the ſilk-worm; the neſts of ants and other mining animals;

mals; the combs of wasps, hornets and bees; the dams and houses of beavers.

The instinct of animals is one of the most delightful and instructive parts of a most pleasant study, that of natural history; and deserves to be more cultivated than it has yet been.

Every manufacturing art among men was invented by some man, improved by others, and brought to perfection by time and experience. Men learn to work in it by long practice, which produces a habit. The arts of men vary in every age, and in every nation, and are found only in those who have been taught them.

The manufactures of animals differ from those of men in many striking particulars.

No animal of the species can claim the invention. No animal ever introduced any new improvement, or any variation from the former practice. Every one of the species has equal skill from the beginning, without teaching, without experience or habit. Every one has its art by a kind of inspiration. I do not mean that it is inspired with the principles or rules of the art, but with the ability and inclination of working in it to perfection, without any knowledge of its principles, rules, or end.

The more sagacious animals may be taught to do many things which they do not by instinct. What they are taught to do, they do with more or less skill, according to their sagacity and their

training. But, in their own arts, they need no teaching nor training, nor is the art ever improved or loſt. Bees gather their honey and their wax, they fabricate their combs and rear their young at this day, neither better nor worſe than they did when VIRGIL ſo ſweetly ſung their works.

The work of every animal is indeed like the works of Nature, perfect in its kind, and can bear the moſt critical examination of the mechanic or the mathematician. One example from the animal laſt mentioned may ſerve to illuſtrate this.

Bees, it is well known, conſtruct their combs with ſmall cells on both ſides, fit both for holding their ſtore of honey, and for rearing their young. There are only three poſſible figures of the cells, which can make them all equal and ſimilar, without any uſeleſs interſtices. Theſe are the equilateral triangle, the ſquare, and the regular hexagon.

It is well known to mathematicians, that there is not a fourth way poſſible, in which a plane may be cut into little ſpaces that ſhall be equal, ſimilar and regular, without leaving any interſtices. Of the three, the hexagon is the moſt proper, both for conveniency and ſtrength. Bees, as if they knew this, make their cells regular hexagons.

As the combs have cells on both ſides, the cells may either be exactly oppoſite, having partition

tition againſt partition, or the bottom of a cell may reſt upon the partitions between the cells on the other ſide, which will ſerve as a buttreſs to ſtrengthen it. The laſt way is beſt for ſtrength; accordingly, the bottom of each cell reſts againſt the point where three partitions meet on the other ſide, which gives it all the ſtrength poſſible.

The bottom of a cell may either be one plane perpendicular to the ſide-partitions, or it may be compoſed of ſeveral planes, meeting in a ſolid angle in the middle point. It is only in one of theſe two ways, that all the cells can be ſimilar without loſing room. And, for the ſame intention, the planes of which the bottom is compoſed, if there be more than one, muſt be three in number, and neither more nor fewer.

It has been demonſtrated, that, by making the bottoms of the cells to conſiſt of three planes meeting in a point, there is a ſaving of material and labour no way inconſiderable. The bees, as if acquainted with theſe principles of ſolid geometry, follow them moſt accurately; the bottom of each cell being compoſed of three planes which make obtuſe angles with the ſide-partitions, and with one another, and meet in a point in the middle of the bottom; the three angles of this bottom being ſupported by three partitions on the other ſide of the comb, and the point of it by the common interſection of thoſe three partitions.

One inſtance more of the mathematical ſkill diſplayed in the ſtructure of a honey-comb deſerves to be mentioned.

It is a curious mathematical problem, at what preciſe angle the three planes which compoſe the bottom of a cell ought to meet, in order to make the greateſt poſſible ſaving, or the leaſt expence, of material and labour.

This is one of thoſe problems, belonging to the higher parts of mathematics, which are called problems of *maxima* and *minima*. It has been reſolved by ſome mathematicians, particularly by the ingenious Mr MACLARURIN, by a fluxionary calculation, which is to be found in the Tranſactions of the Royal Society of London. He has determined preciſely the angle required; and he found, by the moſt exact menſuration the ſubject could admit, that it is the very angle, in which the three planes in the bottom of the cell of a honey-comb do actually meet.

Shall we aſk here, who taught the bee the properties of ſolids, and to reſolve problems of *maxima* and *minima*? If a honey-comb were a work of human art, every man of common ſenſe would conclude, without hesitation, that he who invented the conſtruction, muſt have underſtood the principles on which it is conſtructed.

We need not ſay that bees know none of theſe things. They work moſt geometrically, without any knowledge of geometry; ſomewhat like a child, who, by turning the handle of an organ, makes

makes good muſic, without any knowledge of muſic.

The art is not in the child, but in him who made the organ. In like manner, when a bee makes its combs ſo geometrically, the geometry is not in the bee, but in that great Geometrician who made the bee, and made all things in number, weight and meaſure.

To return to inſtincts in man; thoſe are moſt remarkable which appear in infancy, when we are ignorant of every thing neceſſary to our preſervation, and therefore muſt periſh, if we had not an inviſible Guide, who leads us blind-fold in the way we ſhould take, if we had eyes to ſee it.

Beſides the inſtincts which appear only in infancy, and are intended to ſupply the want of underſtanding in that early period, there are many which continue through life, and which ſupply the defects of our intellectual powers in every period. Of theſe we may obſerve three claſſes.

Firſt, There are many things neceſſary to be done for our preſervation, which, even when we will to do, we know not the means by which they muſt be done.

A man knows that he muſt ſwallow his food before it can nouriſh him. But this action requires the co-operation of many nerves and muſcles, of which he knows nothing; and if it were to be directed ſolely by his underſtanding

and will, he would ſtarve before he learned how to perform it.

Here inſtinct comes in to his aid. He needs do no more than will to ſwallow. All the requiſite motions of nerves and muſcles immediately take place in their proper order, without his knowing or willing any thing about them.

If we aſk here, whoſe will do theſe nerves and muſcles obey? Not his, ſurely, to whom they belong. He knows neither their names, nor nature, nor office; he never thought of them. They are moved by ſome impulſe, of which the cauſe is unknown, without any thought, will or intention on his part, that is, they are moved inſtinctively.

This is the caſe, in ſome degree, in every voluntary motion of our body. Thus, I will to ſtretch out my arm. The effect immediately follows. But we know that the arm is ſtretched out by the contraction of certain muſcles; and that the muſcles are contracted by the influence of the nerves. I know nothing, I think nothing, either of nerves or muſcles, when I ſtretch out my arm; yet this nervous influence, and this contraction of the muſcles, uncalled by me, immediately produce the effect which I willed. This is, as if a weight were to be raiſed, which can be raiſed only by a complication of levers, pullies, and other mechanical powers, that are behind the curtain, and altogether unknown to me. I will to raiſe the weight; and no ſooner is this

this volition exerted, than the machinery behind the curtain falls to work, and raiſes the weight.

If ſuch a caſe ſhould happen, we would conclude, that there is ſome perſon behind the curtain, who knew my will, and put the machine in motion to execute it.

The caſe of my willing to ſtretch out my arm, or to ſwallow my food, has evidently a great ſimilarity to this. But who it is that ſtands behind the curtain, and ſets the internal machinery agoing, is hid from us; ſo ſtrangely and wonderfully are we made. This, however, is evident, that thoſe internal motions are not willed nor intended by us, and therefore are inſtinctive.

A *ſecond* caſe in which we have need of inſtinct, even in advanced life, is, When the action muſt be ſo frequently repeated, that to intend and will it every time it is done, would occupy too much of our thought, and leave no room for other neceſſary employments of the mind.

We muſt breathe often every minute whether awake or aſleep. We muſt often cloſe the eyelids, in order to preſerve the luſtre of the eye. If theſe things required particular attention and volition every time they are done, they would occupy all our thought. Nature therefore gives an impulſe to do them as often as is neceſſary, without any thought at all. They conſume no time, they give not the leaſt interruption to any exerciſe of the mind; becauſe they are done by inſtinct.

A *third* caſe, in which we need the aid of inſtinct, is, When the action muſt be done ſo ſuddenly, that there is no time to think and determine. When a man loſes his balance, either on foot or on horſeback, he makes an inſtantaneous effort to recover it by inſtinct. The effort would be in vain, if it waited the determination of reaſon and will.

When any thing threatens our eyes, we wink hard, by inſtinct, and can hardly avoid doing ſo, even when we know that the ſtroke is aimed in jeſt, and that we are perfectly ſafe from danger. I have ſeen this tried upon a wager, which a man was to gain if he could keep his eyes open, while another aimed a ſtroke at them in jeſt. The difficulty of doing this ſhews that there may be a ſtruggle between inſtinct and will; and that it is not eaſy to reſiſt the impulſe of inſtinct, even by a ſtrong reſolution not yield to it.

Thus the merciful Author of our nature, hath adapted our inſtincts to the defects, and to the weakneſs of our underſtanding. In infancy we are ignorant of every thing; yet many things muſt be done by us for our preſervation: Theſe are done by inſtinct. When we grow up there are many motions of our limbs and bodies neceſſary, which can be performed only by a curious and complex internal machinery; a machinery of which the bulk of mankind are totally ignorant, and which the moſt ſkilful anatomiſt knows but imperfectly. All this machinery is

ſet

ſet agoing by inſtinct. We need only to will the external motion, and all the internal motions, previouſly neceſſary to the effect, take place of themſelves, without our will or command.

Some actions muſt be ſo often repeated, through the whole of life, that, if they required attention and will, we ſhould be able to do nothing elſe: Theſe go on regularly by inſtinct.

Our preſervation from danger often requires ſuch ſudden exertions, that there is no time to think and to determine: Accordingly we make ſuch exertions by inſtinct.

Another thing in the nature of man, which I take to be partly, though not wholly, inſtinctive, is his pronenes to imitation.

ARISTOTLE obſerved, long ago, that man is an imitative animal. He is ſo in more reſpects than one. He is diſpoſed to imitate what he approves. In all arts men learn more, and more agreeably, by example than by rules. Imitation by the chiſſel, by the pencil, by deſcription proſaic and poetical, and by action and geſture, have been favourite and elegant entertainments of the whole ſpecies. In all theſe caſes, however, the imitation is intended and willed, and therefore cannot be ſaid to be inſtinctive.

But, I apprehend, that human nature diſpoſes us to the imitation of thoſe among whom we live, when we neither deſire nor will it.

Let an Engliſhman, of middle age, take up his reſidence in Edinburgh or Glaſgow; although he

he has not the leaſt intention to uſe the Scots dialect, but a firm reſolution to preſerve his own pure and unmixed, he will find it very difficult to make good his intention. He will, in a courſe of years, fall inſenſibly, and without intention, into the tone and accent, and even into the words and phraſes of thoſe he converſes with; and nothing can preſerve him from this, but a ſtrong diſguſt to every Scoticiſm, which perhaps may overcome the natural inſtinct.

It is commonly thought that children often learn to ſtammer by imitation; yet I believe no perſon ever deſired or willed to learn that quality.

I apprehend that inſtinctive imitation has no ſmall influence in forming the peculiarities of provincial dialects, the peculiarities of voice, geſture, and manner, which we ſee in ſome families, the manners peculiar to different ranks, and different profeſſions; and perhaps even in forming national characters, and the human character in general.

The inſtances that hiſtory furniſhes of wild men, brought up from early years, without the ſociety of any of their own ſpecies are ſo few that we cannot build concluſions upon them with great certainty. But all I have heard of agreed in this, that the wild man gave but very ſlender indications of the rational faculties; and, with regard to his mind, was hardly diſtinguiſhable from the more ſagacious of the brutes.

There

There is a conſiderable part of the loweſt rank in every nation, of whom it cannot be ſaid that any pains have been taken by themſelves, or by others, to cultivate their underſtanding, or to form their manners; yet we ſee an immenſe difference between them and the wild man.

This difference is wholly the effect of ſociety; and, I think, it is in a great meaſure, though not wholly, the effect of undeſigned and inſtinctive imitation.

Perhaps, not only our actions, but even our judgment, and belief, is, in ſome caſes, guided by inſtinct, that is, by a natural and blind impulſe.

When we conſider man as a rational creature, it may ſeem right that he ſhould have no belief but what is grounded upon evidence, probable or demonſtrative; and it is, I think, commonly taken for granted, that it is always evidence, real or apparent, that determines our belief.

If this be ſo, the conſequence is, That, in no caſe, can there be any belief, till we find evidence, or, at leaſt, what to our judgment appears to be evidence. I ſuſpect it is not ſo; but that, on the contrary, before we grow up to the full uſe of our rational faculties, we do believe, and muſt believe, many things without any evidence at all.

The faculties which we have in common with brute-animals, are of earlier growth than reaſon. We are irrational animals for a conſiderable time before we can properly be called rational. The

operations

operations of reaſon ſpring up by imperceptible degrees; nor is it poſſible for us to trace accurately the order in which they riſe. The power of reflection, by which only we could trace the progreſs of our growing faculties, comes too late to anſwer that end. Some operations of brute-animals look ſo like reaſon, that they are not eaſily diſtinguiſhed from it. Whether brutes have any thing that can properly be called belief, I cannot ſay; but their actions ſhew ſomething that looks very like it.

If there be any inſtinctive belief in man, it is probably of the ſame kind with that which we aſcribe to brutes, and may be ſpecifically different from that rational belief which is grounded on evidence; but that there is ſomething in man which we call belief, which is not grounded on evidence, I think, muſt be granted.

We need to be informed of many things before we are capable of diſcerning the evidence on which they reſt. Were our belief to be withheld till we are capable, in any degree, of weighing evidence, we ſhould loſe all the benefit of that inſtruction and information, without which we could never attain the uſe of our rational faculties.

Man would never acquire the uſe of reaſon if he were not brought up in the ſociety of reaſonable creatures. The benefit he receives from ſociety, is derived partly from imitation of what he ſees others do, partly from the inſtruction and

and information they communicate to him, without which he could neither be preſerved from deſtruction, nor acquire the uſe of his rational powers.

Children have a thouſand things to learn, and they learn many things every day; more than will be eaſily believed by thoſe who have never given attention to their progreſs.

Oportet diſcentem credere is a common adage. Children have every thing to learn; and, in order to learn, they muſt believe their inſtructors. They need a greater ſtock of faith from infancy to twelve or fourteen, than ever after. But how ſhall they get this ſtock ſo neceſſary to them? If their faith depend upon evidence, the ſtock of evidence, real or apparent, muſt bear proportion to their faith. But ſuch, in reality, is their ſituation, that when their faith muſt be greateſt, the evidence is leaſt. They believe a thouſand things before they ever ſpend a thought upon evidence. Nature ſupplies the want of evidence, and gives them an inſtinctive kind of faith without evidence.

They believe implicitly whatever they are told, and receive with aſſurance the teſtimony of every one, without ever thinking of a reaſon why they ſhould do ſo.

A parent or a maſter might command them to believe; but in vain; for belief is not in our power; bu in the firſt part of life, it is governed by mere teſtimony in matters of fact, and by mere authority

authority in all other matters, no leſs than by evidence in riper years.

It is not the words of the teſtifier, but his belief, that produces this belief in a child: For children ſoon learn to diſtinguiſh what is ſaid in jeſt, from what is ſaid in good earneſt. What appears to them to be ſaid in jeſt, produces no belief. They glory in ſhewing that they are not to be impoſed on. When the ſigns of belief in the ſpeaker are ambiguous, it is pleaſant to obſerve with what ſagacity they pry into his features, to diſcern whether he really believes what he ſays, or only counterfits belief. As ſoon as this point is determined, their belief is regulated by his. If he be doubtful, they are doubtful, if he be aſſured, they are alſo aſſured.

It is well known what a deep impreſſion religious principles, zealouſly inculcated, make upon the minds of children. The abſurdities of ghoſts and hobgoblins early impreſſed, have been known to ſtick ſo faſt, even in enlightened minds, as to baffle all rational conviction.

When we grow up to the uſe of reaſon, teſtimony attended with certain circumſtances, or even authority, may afford a rational ground of belief; but with children, without any regard to circumſtances, either of them operates like demonſtration. And as they ſeek no reaſon, nor can give any reaſon, for this regard to teſtimony and to authority, it is the effect of a natural impulſe, and may be called inſtinct.

Another

Another inſtance of belief which appears to be inſtinctive, is that which children ſhew even in infancy, that an event which they have obſerved in certain circumſtances, will happen again in like circumſtances. A child of half a year old, who has once burned his finger by putting it in the candle, will not put it there again. And if you make a ſhew of putting it in the candle by force, you ſee the moſt manifeſt ſings that he believes he ſhall meet with the ſame calamity.

Mr HUME hath ſhewn very clearly, that this belief is not the effect either of reaſon or experience. He endeavours to account for it by the aſſociation of ideas. Though I am not ſatisfied with his account of this phænomenon, I ſhall not now examine it; becauſe it is ſufficient for the preſent argument, that this belief is not grounded on evidence, real or apparent, which I think he clearly proves.

A perſon who has lived ſo long in the world, as to obſerve that Nature is governed by fixed laws, may have ſome rational ground to expect ſimilar events in ſimilar circumſtances; but this cannot be the caſe of the child. His belief therefore is not grounded on evidence. It is the reſult of his conſtitution.

Nor is it the leſs ſo, though it ſhould ariſe from the aſſociation of ideas. For what is called the aſſociation of ideas is a law of Nature in our conſtitution; which produces its effects without any

operation

operation of reaſon on our part, and in a manner of which we are entirely ignorant.

CHAP. III.

Of Habit.

HABIT differs from inſtinct, not in its nature, but in its origin; the latter being natural, the former acquired. Both operate without will or intention, without thought, and therefore may be called *mechanical principles.*

Habit is commonly defined, *A facility of doing a thing, acquired by having done it frequently.* This definition is ſufficient for habits of art; but the habits which may, with propriety, be called principles of action, muſt give more than a facility, they muſt give an inclination or impulſe to do the action; and that, in many caſes, habits have this force, cannot be doubted.

How many aukward habits, by frequenting improper company, are children apt to learn, in their addreſs, motion, looks, geſture and pronunciation. They acquire ſuch habits commonly from an undeſigned and inſtinctive imitation, before they can judge of what is proper and becoming.

When they are a little advanced in underſtanding, they may eaſily be convinced that ſuch a thing is unbecoming, they may reſolve to forbear it, but when the habit is formed, ſuch a general

ral reſolution is not of itſelf ſufficient; for the habit will operate without intention; and particular attention is neceſſary, on every occaſion, to reſiſt its impulſe, until it be undone by the habit of oppoſing it.

It is owing to the force of habits, early acquired by imitation, that a man who has grown up to manhood in the loweſt rank of life, if fortune raiſe him to a higher rank, very rarely acquires the air and manners of a gentleman.

When to that inſtinctive imitation, which I ſpoke of before, we join the force of habit, it is eaſy to ſee, that theſe mechanical principles have no ſmall ſhare in forming the manners and character of moſt men.

The difficulty of overcoming vicious habits has, in all ages, been a common topic of theologians and moraliſts; and we ſee too many ſad examples to permit us to doubt of it.

There are good habits, in a moral ſenſe, as well as bad; and it is certain, that the ſtated and regular performance of what we approve, not only makes it eaſy, but makes us uneaſy in the omiſſion of it. This is the caſe, even when the action derives all its goodneſs from the opinion of the performer. A good illiterate Roman Catholic does not ſleep ſound if he goes to bed without telling his beads, and repeating prayers which he does not underſtand.

ARISTOTLE makes wiſdom, prudence, good ſenſe, ſcience and art, as well as the moral vir-

tues and vices, to be *habits*. If he meant no more, by giving this name to all thoſe intellectual and moral qualities, than that they are all ſtrengthened and confirmed by repeated acts, this is undoubtedly true. I take the word in a leſs extenſive ſenſe, when I conſider habits as principles of action. I conceive it to be a part of our conſtitution, that what we have been accuſtomed to do, we acquire, not only a facility, but a proneneſs to do on like occaſions; ſo that it requires a particular will and effort to forbear it, but to do it, requires very often no will at all. We are carried by habit as by a ſtream in ſwimming, if we make no reſiſtance.

Every art furniſhes examples both of the power of habits and of their utility; no one more than the moſt common of all arts, the art of ſpeaking.

Articulate language is ſpoken, not by nature, but by art. It is no eaſy matter to children, to learn the ſimple ſounds of language; I mean, to learn to pronounce the vowels and conſonants. It would be much more difficult, if they were not led by inſtinct to imitate the ſounds they hear; for the difficulty is vaſtly greater of teaching the deaf to pronounce the letters and words, though experience ſhows that it can be done.

What is it that makes this pronunciation ſo eaſy at laſt which was ſo difficult at firſt? It is habit.

But from what cauſe does it happen, that a good ſpeaker no ſooner conceives what he would expreſs,

expreſs, than the letters, ſyllables and words arrange themſelves according to innumerable rules of ſpeech, while he never thinks of theſe rules? He means to expreſs certain ſentiments; in order to do this properly, a ſelection muſt be made of the materials, out of many thouſands. He makes this ſelection without any expence of time or thought. The materials ſelected muſt be arranged in a particular order, according to innumerable rules of grammar, logic and rhetoric, and accompanied with a particular tone and emphaſis. He does all this as it were by inſpiration, without thinking of any of theſe rules, and without breaking one of them.

This art, if it were not more common, would appear more wonderful, than that a man ſhould dance blind-fold amidſt a thouſand burning plough-ſhares, without being burnt; yet all this may be done by habit.

It appears evident, that as, without inſtinct, the infant could not live to become a man, ſo, without habit, man would remain an infant through life, and would be as helpleſs, as unhandy, as ſpeechleſs, and as much a child in underſtanding at threeſcore as at three.

I ſee no reaſon to think, that we ſhall ever be able to aſſign the phyſical cauſe, either of inſtinct, or of the power of habit.

Both ſeem to be parts of our original conſtitution. Their end and uſe is evident; but we can aſſign no cauſe of them, but the will of him who made us.

With regard to inſtinct, which is a natural propenſity, this will perhaps be eaſily granted; but it is no leſs true with regard to that power and inclination which we acquire by habit.

No man can ſhew a reaſon why our doing a thing frequently ſhould produce either facility or inclination to do it.

The fact is ſo notorious, and ſo conſtantly in our eye, that we are apt to think no reaſon ſhould be ſought for it, any more than why the ſun ſhines. But there muſt be a cauſe of the ſun's ſhining, and there muſt be a cauſe of the power of habit.

We ſee nothing analogous to it in inanimate matter, or in things made by human art. A clock or a watch, a waggon or a plough, by the cuſtom of going, does not learn to go better, or require leſs moving force. The earth does not increaſe in fertility by the cuſtom of bearing crops.

It is ſaid, that trees and other vegetables, by growing long in an unkindly ſoil or climate, ſometimes acquire qualities by which they can bear its inclemency with leſs hurt. This, in the vegetable kingdom, has ſome reſemblance to the power of habit; but, in inanimate matter, I know nothing that reſembles it.

A ſtone loſes nothing of its weight by being long ſupported, or made to move upward. A body by being toſſed about ever ſo long, or ever ſo violently, loſes nothing of its *inertia*, nor acquires the leaſt diſpoſition to change its ſtate.

ESSAY

ESSAY III. PART II.

Of Animal Principles of Action.

CHAP. I.

Of Appetites.

HAVING diſcourſed of the *mechanical* principles of action, I proceed to conſider thoſe I called *animal.*

They are ſuch as operate upon the will and intention, but do not ſuppoſe any exerciſe of judgment or reaſon; and are moſt of them to be found in ſome brute-animals, as well as in man.

In this claſs, the firſt kind I ſhall call *appetites*, taking that word in a ſtricter ſenſe than it is ſometimes taken, even by good writers.

The word *appetite* is ſometimes limited, ſo as to ſignify only the deſire of food when we hunger; ſometimes it is extended ſo as to ſignify any ſtrong deſire, whatever be its object. Without pretending to cenſure any uſe of the word which cuſtom hath authoriſed, I beg leave to limit it to a particular claſs of deſires, which are diſtinguiſhed from all others by the following marks.

Firſt, Every appetite is accompanied with an uneaſy ſenſation proper to it, which is ſtrong or

weak, in proportion to the deſire we have of the object. *Secondly*, Appetites are not conſtant, but periodical, being ſated by their objects for a time, and returning after certain periods. Such is the nature of thoſe principles of action, to which I beg leave, in this Eſſay, to appropriate the name of *appetites*. Thoſe that are chiefly obſervable in man, as well as in moſt other animals, are hunger, thirſt, and luſt.

If we attend to the appetite of hunger, we ſhall find in it two ingredients, an uneaſy ſenſation and a deſire to eat. The deſire keeps pace with the ſenſation, and ceaſes when it ceaſes. When a man is ſated with eating, both the uneaſy ſenſation and the deſire to eat ceaſe for a time, and return after a certain interval. So it is with other appetites.

In infants, for ſome time after they come into the world, the uneaſy ſenſation of hunger is probably the whole. We cannot ſuppoſe in them, before experience, any conception of eating, nor, conſequently, any deſire of it. They are led by mere inſtinct to ſuck when they feel the ſenſation of hunger. But when experience has connected, in their imagination, the uneaſy ſenſation with the means of removing it, the deſire of the laſt comes to be ſo aſſociated with the firſt, that they remain through life inſeparable: And we give the name of *hunger* to the principle that is made up of both.

That

That the appetite of hunger includes the two ingredients I have mentioned will not, I apprehend, be queſtioned. I take notice of it the rather becauſe we may, if I miſtake not, find a ſimilar compoſition in other principles of action. They are made up of different ingredients, and may be analyzed into the parts that enter into their compoſition.

If one Philoſopher ſhould maintain, that hunger is an uneaſy ſenſation, another, that it is a deſire to eat, they ſeem to differ widely; for a deſire and a ſenſation are very different things, and have no ſimilitude. But they are both in the right; for hunger includes both an uneaſy ſenſation and a deſire to eat.

Although there has been no ſuch diſpute among Philoſophers as we have ſuppoſed with regard to hunger, yet there have been ſimilar diſputes with regard to other principles of action; and it deſerves to be conſidered whether they may not be terminated in a ſimilar manner.

The ends for which our natural appetites are given, are too evident to eſcape the obſervation of any man of the leaſt reflection. Two of thoſe I named are intended for the preſervation of the individual, and the third for the continuance of the ſpecies.

The reaſon of mankind would be altogether inſufficient for theſe ends, without the direction and call of appetite.

Thóugh a man knew that his life muſt be ſupported by eating, reaſon could not direct him when to eat, or what; how much, or how often. In all theſe things, appetite is a much better guide than our reaſon. Were reaſon only to direct us in this matter, its calm voice would often be drowned in the hurry of buſineſs, or the charms of amuſement. But the voice of appetite riſes gradually, and, at laſt, becomes loud enough to call off our attention from any other employment.

Every man muſt be convinced, that, without our appetites, even ſuppoſing mankind inſpired with all the knowledge requiſite for anſwering their ends, the race of men muſt have periſhed long ago; but, by their means, the race is continued from one generation to another, whether men be ſavage or civilized, knowing or ignorant, virtuous or vicious.

By the ſame means, every tribe of brute-animals, from the whale that ranges the ocean to the leaſt microſcopic inſect, has been continued from the beginning of the world to this day; nor has good evidence been found, that any one ſpecies which GOD made has periſhed.

Nature has given to every animal, not only an appetite for its food, but taſte and ſmell, by which it diſtinguiſhes the food proper for it.

It is pleaſant to ſee a caterpillar, which Nature intended to live upon the leaf of one ſpecies of plant, travel over a hundred leaves of other

other kinds without taſting one, till it comes to that which is its natural food, which it immediately falls on, and devours greedily.

Moſt caterpillars feed only upon the leaf of one ſpecies of plant, and Nature ſuits the ſeaſon of their production to the food that is intended to nouriſh them. Many inſects and animals have a greater variety of food; but, of all animals, man has the greateſt variety, being able to ſubſiſt upon almoſt every kind of vegetable or animal food, from the bark of trees to the oil of whales.

I believe our natural appetites may be made more violent by exceſſive indulgence, and that, on the other hand, they may be weakened by ſtarving. The firſt is often the effect of a pernicious luxury, the laſt may ſometimes be the effect of want, ſometimes of ſuperſtition. I apprehend that Nature has given to our appetites that degree of ſtrength which is moſt proper for us; and that whatever alters their natural tone, either in exceſs or in defect, does not mend the work of Nature, but may mar and pervert it.

A man may eat from appetite only. So the brutes commonly do. He may eat to pleaſe his taſte when he has no call of appetite. I believe a brute may do this alſo. He may eat for the ſake of health, when neither appetite nor taſte invites. This, as far as I am able to judge, brutes never do.

From ſo many different principles, and from many more, the ſame action may be done; and this

this may be ſaid of moſt human actions. From this, it appears, that very different and contrary theories may ſerve to account for the actions of men. The cauſes aſſigned may be ſufficient to produce the effect, and yet not be the true cauſes.

To act merely from appetite is neither good nor ill in a moral view. It is neither an object of praiſe nor of blame. No man claims any praiſe becauſe he eats when he is hungry, or reſts when he is weary. On the other hand, he is no object of blame, if he obeys the call of appetite when there is no reaſon to hinder him. In this, he acts agreeably to his nature.

From this we may obſerve, that the definition of virtuous actions, given by the ancient Stoics, and adopted by ſome modern authors, is imperfect. They defined virtuous actions to be ſuch as are *according to nature*. What is done according to the animal part of our nature, which is common to us with the brute-animals, is in itſelf neither virtuous nor vicious, but perfectly indifferent. Then only it becomes vicious, when it is done in oppoſition to ſome principle of ſuperior importance and authority. And it may be virtuous, if done for ſome important or worthy end.

Appetites, conſidered in themſelves, are neither ſocial principles of action, nor ſelfiſh. They cannot be called ſocial, becauſe they imply no concern for the good of others. Nor can they juſtly

juſtly be called ſelfiſh, though they be commonly referred to that claſs. An appetite draws us to a certain object, without regard to its being good for us, or ill. There is no ſelf-love implied in it any more than benevolence. We ſee, that, in many caſes, appetite may lead a man to what he knows will be to his hurt. To call this acting from ſelf-love, is to pervert the meaning of words. It is evident, that, in every caſe of this kind, ſelf-love is ſacrificed to appetite.

There are ſome principles of the human frame very like to our appetites, though they do not commonly get that name.

Men are made for labour, either of body or mind. Yet exceſſive labour hurts the powers of both. To prevent this hurt, Nature hath given to men, and other animals, an uneaſy ſenſation, which always attends exceſſive labour, and which we call *fatigue*, *wearineſs*, *laſſitude*. This uneaſy ſenſation is conjoined with the deſire of reſt, or intermiſſion of our labour. And thus Nature calls us to reſt when we are weary, in the ſame manner as to eat when we are hungry.

In both caſes there is a deſire of a certain object, and an uneaſy ſenſation accompanying that deſire. In both caſes the deſire is ſatiated by its object, and returns after certain intervals. In this only they differ, that in the appetites firſt mentioned, the uneaſy ſenſation ariſes at intervals without action, and leads to a certain action:

In

In wearineſs, the uneaſy ſenſation ariſes from action too long continued, and leads to reſt.

But Nature intended that we ſhould be active, and we need ſome principle to incite us to action, when we happen not to be invited by any appetite or paſſion.

For this end, when ſtrength and ſpirits are recruited by reſt, Nature has made total inaction as uneaſy as exceſſive labour.

We may call this the principle of *activity*. It is moſt conſpicuous in children, who cannot be ſuppoſed to know how uſeful and neceſſary it is for their improvement to be conſtantly employed. Their conſtant activity therefore appears not to proceed from their having ſome end conſtantly in view, but rather from this, that they deſire to be always doing ſomething, and feel uneaſineſs in total inaction.

Nor is this principle confined to childhood; it has great effects in advanced life.

When a man has neither hope, nor fear, nor deſire, nor project, nor employment, of body or mind, one might be apt to think him the happieſt mortal upon earth, having nothing to do but to enjoy himſelf: but we find him, in fact, the moſt unhappy.

He is more weary of inaction than ever he was of exceſſive labour. He is weary of the world, and of his own exiſtence; and is more miſerable than the ſailor wreſtling with a ſtorm, or the ſoldier mounting a breach.

This

This diſmal ſtate is commonly the lot of the man who has neither exerciſe of body nor employment of mind. For the mind, like water, corrupts and putrifies by ſtagnation, but by running purifies and refines.

Beſides the appetites which Nature hath given us for uſeful and neceſſary purpoſes, we may create appetites which Nature never gave.

The frequent uſe of things which ſtimulate the nervous ſyſtem, produces a languor when their effect is gone off, and a deſire to repeat them. By this means a deſire of a certain object is created, accompanied by an uneaſy ſenſation. Both are removed for a time by the object deſired; but they return after a certain interval. This differs from natural appetite, only in being acquired by cuſtom. Such are the appetites which ſome men acquire for the uſe of tobacco, for opiates, and for intoxicating liquors.

Theſe are commonly called habits, and juſtly. But there are different kinds of habits, even of the active ſort, which ought to be diſtinguiſhed. Some habits produce only a facility of doing a thing, without any inclination to do it. All arts are habits of this kind, but they cannot be called principles of action. Other habits produce a proneneſs to do an action, without thought or intention. Theſe we conſidered before as mechanical principles of action. There are other habits which produce a deſire of a certain object, and an uneaſy ſenſation, till it is obtained

tained. It is this laſt kind only that I call acquired appetites.

As it is beſt to preſerve our natural appetites, in that tone and degree of ſtrength which Nature gives them, ſo we ought to beware of acquiring appetites which Nature never gave. They are always uſeleſs, and very often hurtful.

Although, as was before obſerved, there be neither virtue nor vice in acting from appetite, there may be much of either in the management of our appetites.

When appetite is oppoſed by ſome principle drawing a contrary way, there muſt be a determination of the will, which ſhall prevail, and this determination may be, in a moral ſenſe, right or wrong.

Appetite, even in a brute-animal, may be reſtrained by a ſtronger principle oppoſed to it. A dog, when he is hungry and has meat ſet before him, may be kept from touching it by the fear of immediate puniſhment. In this caſe his fear operates more ſtrongly than his deſire.

Do we attribute any virtue to the dog on this account? I think not. Nor ſhould we aſcribe any virtue to a man in a like caſe. The animal is carried by the ſtrongeſt moving force. This requires no exertion, no ſelf-government, but paſſively to yield to the ſtrongeſt impulſe. This, I think, brutes always do; therefore we attribute to them, neither virtue nor vice. We conſider

ſider them as being neither objects of moral approbation, nor diſapprobation.

But it may happen, that, when appetite draws one way, it may be oppoſed, not by any appetite or paſſion, but by ſome cool principle of action, which has authority without any impulſive force: For example, by ſome intereſt, which is too diſtant to raiſe any paſſion or emotion; or by ſome conſideration of decency, or of duty.

In caſes of this kind, the man is convinced that he ought not to yield to appetite, yet there is not an equal or a greater impulſe to oppoſe it. There are circumſtances, indeed, that convince the judgment, but theſe are not ſufficient to determine the will againſt a ſtrong appetite, without ſelf-government.

I apprehend that brute-animals have no power of ſelf-government. From their conſtitution, they muſt be led by the appetite or paſſion which is ſtrongeſt for the time.

On this account they have, in all ages, and among all nations, been thought incapable of being governed by laws, though ſome of them may be ſubjects of diſcipline.

The ſame would be the condition of man, if he had no power to reſtrain appetite, but by a ſtronger contrary appetite or paſſion. It would be to no purpoſe to preſcribe laws to him for the government of his actions. You might as well forbid the wind to blow, as forbid him to follow whatever

whatever happens to give the ſtrongeſt preſent impulſe.

Every one knows, that when appetite draws one way, duty, decency, or even intereſt, may draw the contrary way; and that appetite may give a ſtronger impulſe than any one of theſe, or even all of them conjoined. Yet it is certain, that, in every caſe of this kind, appetite ought to yield to any of theſe principles when it ſtands oppoſed to them. It is in ſuch caſes that ſelf-government is neceſſary.

The man who ſuffers himſelf to be led by appetite to do what he knows he ought not to do, has an immediate and natural conviction that he did wrong, and might have done otherwiſe; and therefore he condemns himſelf, and confeſſes that he yielded to an appetite which ought to have been under his command.

Thus it appears, that though our natural appetites have in themſelves neither virtue nor vice, though the acting merely from appetite, when there is no principle of greater authority to oppoſe it, be a matter indifferent; yet there may be a great deal of virtue or of vice in the management of our appetites; and that the power of ſelf-government is neceſſary for their regulation.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Deſires.

ANOTHER claſs of animal principles of action in man, I ſhall, for want of a better ſpecific name, call *deſires*.

They are diſtinguiſhed from appetites by this: That there is not an uneaſy ſenſation proper to each, and always accompanying it; and that they are not periodical, but conſtant, not being ſated with their objects for a time, as appetites are.

The deſires I have in view, are chiefly theſe three, the deſire of power, the deſire of eſteem, and the deſire of knowledge.

We may, I think, perceive ſome degree of theſe principles in brute-animals of the more ſagacious kind; but in man they are much more conſpicuous, and have a larger ſphere.

In a herd of black cattle there is a rank and ſubordination. When a ſtranger is introduced into the herd, he muſt fight every one till his rank is ſettled. Then he yields to the ſtronger and aſſumes authority over the weaker. The caſe is much the ſame in the crew of a ſhip of war.

As ſoon as men aſſociate together, the deſire of ſuperiority diſcovers itſelf. In barbarous tribes, as well as among the gregarious kinds of animals, rank is determined by ſtrength, courage, ſwiftneſs, or ſuch other qualities. Among ci-

vilized nations, many things of a different kind give power and rank; places in government, titles of honour, riches, wiſdom, eloquence, virtue, and even the reputation of theſe. All theſe are either different ſpecies of power, or means of acquiring it; and when they are ſought for that end, muſt be conſidered as inſtances of the deſire of power.

The deſire of eſteem is not peculiar to man. A dog exults in the approbation and applauſe of his maſter, and is humbled by his diſpleaſure. But in man this deſire is much more conſpicuous, and operates in a thouſand different ways.

Hence it is that ſo very few are proof againſt flattery, when it is not very groſs. We wiſh to be well in the opinion of others, and therefore are prone to interpret in our own favour, the ſigns of their good opinion, even when they are ambiguous.

There are few injuries that are not more eaſy to be born than contempt.

We cannot always avoid ſeeing, in the conduct of others, things that move contempt; but, in all polite circles, the ſigns of it muſt be ſuppreſſed, otherwiſe men could not converſe together.

As there is no quality, common to good and bad men, more eſteemed than courage, nor any thing in a man more the object of contempt than cowardice; hence every man deſires to be thought a man of courage; and the reputation of cowardice

dice is worſe than death. How many have died to avoid being thought cowards? How many, for the ſame reaſon, have done what made them unhappy to the end of their lives.

I believe many a tragical event, if traced to its ſource in human nature, might be referred to the deſire of eſteem, or the dread of contempt.

In brute-animals there is ſo little that can be called knowledge, that the deſire of it can make no conſiderable figure in them. Yet I have ſeen a cat, when brought into a new habitation, examine with care every corner of it, and anxious to know every lurking place, and the avenues to it. And I believe the ſame thing may be obſerved in many other ſpecies, eſpecially in thoſe that are liable to be hunted by man, or by other animals.

But the deſire of knowledge in the human ſpecies, is a principle that cannot eſcape our obſervation.

The curioſity of children is the principle that occupies moſt of their time while they are awake. What they can handle they examine on all ſides, and often break in pieces, in order to diſcover what is within.

When men grow up their curioſity does not ceaſe, but is employed upon other objects. Novelty is conſidered as one great ſource of the pleaſures of taſte, and indeed is neceſſary, in one degree or other, to give a reliſh to them all.

When we ſpeak of the deſire of knowledge as a principle of action in man, we muſt not confine it to the purſuits of the Philoſopher, or of the literary man. The deſire of knowledge diſcovers itſelf, in one perſon, by an avidity to know the ſcandal of the village, and who makes love, and to whom; in another, to know the economy of the next family; in another, to know what the poſt brings; and, in another, to trace the path of a new comet.

When men ſhew an anxiety, and take pains to know what is of no moment, and can be of no uſe to themſelves or to others, this is trifling, and vain curioſity. It is a culpable weakneſs and folly; but ſtill it is the wrong direction of a natural principle; and ſhews the force of that principle, more than when it is directed to matters worthy to be known.

I think it unneceſſary to uſe arguments to ſhow, that the deſires of power, of eſteem, and of knowledge, are natural principles in the conſtitution of man. Thoſe who are not convinced of this by reflecting upon their own feelings and ſentiments, will not eaſily be convinced by arguments.

Power, eſteem and knowledge, are ſo uſeful for many purpoſes, that it is eaſy to reſolve the deſire of them into other principles. Thoſe who do ſo muſt maintain, that we never deſire theſe objects for their own ſakes, but as means only of procuring pleaſure, or ſomething which is a natural object of

of deſire. This, indeed, was the doctrine of EPICURUS; and it has had its votaries in modern times. But it has been obſerved, that men deſire poſthumous fame, which can procure no pleaſure.

EPICURUS himſelf, though he believed that he ſhould have no exiſtence after death, was ſo deſirous to be remembered with eſteem, that, by his laſt will, he appointed his heirs to commemorate his birth annually, and to give a monthly feaſt to his diſciples, upon the twentieth day of the moon. What pleaſure could this give to EPICURUS when he had no exiſtence? On this account, CICERO juſtly obſerves, that his doctrine was refuted by his own practice.

Innumerable inſtances occur in life, of men who ſacrifice eaſe, pleaſure, and every thing elſe, to the luſt of power, of fame, or even of knowledge. It is abſurd to ſuppoſe, that men ſhould ſacrifice the end to what they deſire only as the means of promoting that end.

The natural deſires I have mentioned are, in themſelves, neither virtuous nor vicious. They are parts of our conſtitution, and ought to be regulated and reſtrained, when they ſtand in competition with more important principles. But to eradicate them if it were poſſible, (and I believe it is not), would only be like cutting off a leg or an arm, that is, making ourſelves other creatures than GOD has made us.

They cannot, with propriety, be called ſelfiſh

principles, though they have commonly been accounted ſuch.

When power is deſired for its own ſake, and not as the means in order to obtain ſomething elſe, this deſire is neither ſelfiſh nor ſocial. When a man deſires power as the means of doing good to others, this is benevolence. When he deſires it only as the means of promoting his own good, this is ſelf-love. But when he deſires it for its own ſake, this only can properly be called the deſire of power; and it implies neither ſelf-love nor benevolence. The ſame thing may be applied to the deſires of eſteem and of knowledge.

The wiſe intention of Nature in giving us theſe deſires, is no leſs evident than in giving our natural appetites.

Without the natural appetites, reaſon, as was before obſerved, would be inſufficient, either for the preſervation of the individual, or the continuation of the ſpecies; and without the natural deſires we have mentioned, human virtue would be inſufficient to influence mankind to a tolerable conduct in ſociety.

To theſe natural deſires, common to good and to bad men, it is owing, that a man, who has little or no regard to virtue, may notwithſtanding be a good member of ſociety. It is true, indeed, that perfect virtue, joined with perfect knowledge, would make both our appetites and deſires unneceſſary incumbrances of our nature; but as human knowledge and human virtue are

both

both very imperfect, theſe appetites and deſires are neceſſary ſupplements to our imperfections.

Society, among men could not ſubſiſt without a certain degree of that regularity of conduct which virtue preſcribes. To this regularity of conduct, men who have no virtue are induced by a regard to character, ſometimes by a regard to intereſt.

Even in thoſe who are not deſtitute of virtue, a regard to character is often an uſeful auxiliary to it, when both principles concur in their direction.

The purſuits of power, of fame, and of knowledge, require ſelf-command no leſs than virtue does. In our behaviour towards our fellow-creatures, they generally lead to that very conduct which virtue requires. I ſay *generally*, for this, no doubt, admits of exceptions, eſpecially in the caſe of ambition, or the deſire of power.

The evils which ambition has produced in the world are a common topic of declamation. But it ought to be obſerved, that where it has led to one action hurtful to ſociety, it has led to ten thouſand that are beneficial to it. And we juſtly look upon the want of ambition as one of the moſt unfavourable ſymptoms in a man's temper.

The deſires of eſteem and of knowledge are highly uſeful to ſociety, as well as the deſire of power, and, at the ſame time, are leſs dangerous in their exceſſes.

Although actions proceeding merely from the love of power, of reputation, or of knowledge, cannot be accounted virtuous, or be entitled to moral approbation; yet we allow them to be manly, ingenuous, and ſuited to the dignity of human nature; and therefore they are entitled to a degree of eſtimation, ſuperior to thoſe which proceed from mere appetite.

ALEXANDER the Great deſerved that epithet in the early part of his life, when eaſe and pleaſure, and every appetite, were ſacrificed to the love of glory and power. But when we view him conquered by oriental luxury, and uſing his power to gratify his paſſions and appetites, he ſinks in our eſteem, and ſeems to forfeit the title which he had acquired.

SARDANAPALUS, who is ſaid to have purſued pleaſure as eagerly as ALEXANDER purſued glory, never obtained from mankind the appellation of *the Great*.

Appetite is the principle of moſt of the actions of brutes, and we account it brutal in a man to employ himſelf chiefly in the gratification of his appetites. The deſires of power, of eſteem, and of knowledge, are capital parts in the conſtitution of man; and the actions proceeding from them, though not properly virtuous, are human and manly; and they claim a juſt ſuperiority over thoſe that proceed from appetite. This, I think, is th univerſal and unbiaſſed judgment of mankind. Upon what ground this judgment

ment is founded, may deſerve to be conſidered in its proper place.

The deſires we have mentioned are not only highly uſeful in ſociety, and in their nature more noble than our appetites, they are likewiſe the moſt proper engines that can be uſed in the education and diſcipline of men.

In training brute-animals to ſuch habits as they are capable of, the fear of puniſhment is the chief inſtrument to be uſed. But in training men of ingenuous diſpoſition, ambition to excel, and the love of eſteem, are much nobler and more powerful engines, by which they may be led to worthy conduct, and trained to good habits.

To this we may add, that the deſires we have mentioned are very friendly to real virtue, and make it more eaſy to be acquired.

A man that is not quite abandoned muſt behave ſo in ſociety as to preſerve ſome degree of reputation. This every man deſires to do, and the greater part actually do it. In order to this, he muſt acquire the habit of reſtraining his appetites and paſſions within the bounds which common decency requires, and ſo as to make himſelf a tolerable member of ſociety, if not an uſeful and agreeable one.

It cannot be doubted that many, from a regard to character and to the opinion of others, are led to make themſelves both uſeful and agreeable members of ſociety, in whom a ſenſe of duty has but a ſmall influence.

Thus

Thus men, living in ſociety, eſpecially in poliſhed ſociety, are tamed and civilized by the principles that are common to good and bad men. They are taught to bring their appetites and paſſions under due reſtraint before the eyes of men, which makes it more eaſy to bring them under the rein of virtue.

As a horſe that is broken is more eaſily managed than an unbroken colt, ſo the man who has undergone the diſcipline of ſociety is more tractable, and is in an excellent ſtate of preparation for the diſcipline of virtue; and that ſelf-command, which is neceſſary in the race of ambition and honour, is an attainment of no ſmall importance in the courſe of virtue.

For this reaſon, I apprehend, they err very groſsly who conceive the life of a hermit to be favourable to a courſe of virtue. The hermit, no doubt, is free from ſome temptations to vice, but he is deprived of many ſtrong inducements to ſelf-government, as well as of every opportunity of exerciſing the ſocial virtues.

A very ingenious author has reſolved our moral ſentiments reſpecting the virtues of ſelf-government, into a regard to the opinion of men. This I think is giving a great deal too much to the love of eſteem, and putting the ſhadow of virtue in place of the ſubſtance; but that a regard to the opinion of others is, in moſt inſtances of our external behaviour, a great inducement to good conduct, cannot be doubted.

For,

For, whatever men may practice themſelves, they will always approve of that in others which they think right.

It was before obſerved, that, beſides the appetites which Nature has given us, we may acquire appetites which, by indulgence, become as important as the natural. The ſame thing may be applied to deſires.

One of the moſt remarkable acquired deſires is that of money, which, in commercial ſtates, will be found in moſt men, in one degree or other, and, in ſome men, ſwallows up every other deſire, appetite and paſſion.

The deſire of money can then only be accounted a principle of action, when it is deſired for its own ſake, and not merely as the means of procuring ſomething elſe.

It ſeems evident, that there is in miſers ſuch a deſire of money; and, I ſuppoſe, no man will ſay that it is natural, or a part of our original conſtitution. It ſeems to be the effect of habit.

In commercial nations, money is an inſtrument by which almoſt every thing may be procured that is deſired. Being uſeful for many different purpoſes as the means, ſome men loſe ſight of the end, and terminate their deſire upon the means. Money is alſo a ſpecies of power, putting a man in condition to do many things which he could not do without it; and power is a natural object of deſire, even when it is not exerciſed.

In

In like manner, a man may acquire the deſire of a title of honour, of an equipage, of an eſtate.

Although our natural deſires are highly beneficial to ſociety, and even aiding to virtue, yet acquired deſires are not only uſeleſs, but hurtful and even diſgraceful.

No man is aſhamed to own, that he loves power, that he loves eſteem, that he loves knowledge, for their own ſake. There may be an exceſs in the love of theſe things, which is a blemiſh; but there is a degree of it, which is natural, and is no blemiſh. To love money, titles or equipage, on any other account than as they are uſeful or ornamental, is allowed by all to be weakneſs and folly.

The natural deſires I have been conſidering, though they cannot be called *ſocial* principles of action in the common ſenſe of that word, ſince it is not their object to procure any good or benefit to others, yet they have ſuch a relation to ſociety, as to ſhew moſt evidently the intention of Nature to be, that man ſhould live in ſociety.

The deſire of knowledge is not more natural than is the deſire of communicating our knowledge. Even power would be leſs valued if there were no opportunity of ſhewing it to others. It derives half its value from that circumſtance. And as to the deſire of eſteem, it can have no poſſible gratification but in ſociety.

Theſe parts of our conſtitution, therefore, are evidently intended for ſocial life; and it is not more

more evident that birds were made for flying and fiſhes for ſwimming, than that man, endowed with a natural deſire of power, of eſteem, and of knowledge, is made, not for the ſavage and ſolitary ſtate, but for living in ſociety.

CHAP. III.

Of Benevolent Affection in general.

WE have ſeen how, by inſtinct and habit, a kind of mechanical principles, man, without any expence of thought, without deliberation or will, is led to many actions, neceſſary for his preſervation and well-being, which, without thoſe principles, all his ſkill and wiſdom would not have been able to accompliſh.

It may perhaps be thought, that his deliberate and voluntary actions are to be guided by his reaſon.

But it ought to be obſerved, that he is a voluntary agent long before he has the uſe of reaſon. Reaſon and virtue, the prerogatives of man, are of the lateſt growth. They come to maturity by ſlow degrees, and are too weak, in the greater part of the ſpecies, to ſecure the preſervation of individuals and of communities, and to produce that varied ſcene of human life, in which they are to be exerciſed and improved.

Therefore

Therefore the wiſe Author of our being hath implanted in human nature many inferior principles of action, which, with little or no aid of reaſon or virtue, preſerve the ſpecies, and produce the various exertions, and the various changes and revolutions which we obſerve upon the theatre of life.

In this buſy ſcene, reaſon and virtue have acceſs to act their parts, and do often produce great and good effects; but whether they interpoſe or not, there are actors of an inferior order that will carry on the play, and produce a variety of events, good or bad.

Reaſon, if it were perfect, would lead men to uſe the proper means of preſerving their own lives, and continuing their kind. But the Author of our being hath not thought fit to leave this taſk to reaſon alone, otherwiſe the race would long ago have been extinct. He hath given us, in common with other animals, appetites, by which thoſe important purpoſes are ſecured, whether men be wiſe or fooliſh, virtuous or vicious.

Reaſon, if it were perfect, would lead men neither to loſe the benefit of their active powers by inactivity, nor to overſtrain them by exceſſive labour. But Nature hath given a powerful aſſiſtant to reaſon, by making inactivity a grievous puniſhment to itſelf; and by annexing the pain of laſſitude to exceſſive labour.

Reaſon, if it were perfect, would lead us to deſire power, knowledge, and the eſteem and affection

tion of our fellow-men, as means of promoting our own happineſs, and of being uſeful to others. Here again, Nature, to ſupply the defects of reaſon, hath given us a ſtrong natural deſire of thoſe objects, which leads us to purſue them without regard to their utility.

Theſe principles we have already conſidered; and, we may obſerve, that all of them have things, not perſons, for their object. They neither imply any good nor ill affection towards any other perſon, nor even towards ourſelves. They cannot therefore, with propriety, be called either *ſelfiſh* or *ſocial*. But there are various principles of action in man, which have perſons for their immediate object, and imply, in their very nature, our being well or ill affected to ſome perſon, or, at leaſt, to ſome animated being.

Such principles I ſhall call by the general name of *affections*; whether they diſpoſe us to do good or hurt to others.

Perhaps, in giving them this general name, I extend the meaning of the word *affection* beyond its common uſe in diſcourſe. Indeed our language ſeems in this to have departed a little from analogy: For we uſe the verb *affect*, and the participle *affected*, in an indifferent ſenſe, ſo that they may be joined either with good or ill. A man may be ſaid to be ill affected towards another man, or well affected. But the word *affection*, which, according to analogy, ought to have the ſame latitude of ſignification with that from which

which it is derived, and therefore ought to be applicable to ill affections as well as to good, ſeems, by cuſtom, to be limited to good affections. When we ſpeak of having affection for any perſon, it is always underſtood to be a benevolent affection.

Malevolent principles, ſuch as anger, reſentment, envy, are not commonly called *affections*, but rather *paſſions*.

I take the reaſon of this to be, that the malevolent affections are almoſt always accompanied with that perturbation of mind which we properly call *paſſion*; and this paſſion, being the moſt conſpicuous ingredient, gives its name to the whole.

Even love, when it goes beyond a certain degree, is called a *paſſion*. But it gets not that name when it is ſo moderate as not to diſcompoſe a man's mind, nor deprive him in any meaſure of the government of himſelf.

As we give the name of *paſſion*, even to benevolent affection when it is ſo vehement as to diſcompoſe the mind, ſo, I think, without treſpaſſing much againſt propriety of words, we may give the name of *affection* even to malevolent principles, when unattended with that diſturbance of mind which commonly, though not always, goes along with them, and which has made them get the name of *paſſions*.

The principles which lead us immediately to deſire the good of others, and thoſe that lead us to

to desire their hurt, agree in this, that persons, and not things, are their immediate object. Both imply our being some way affected towards the person. They ought therefore to have some common name to express what is common in their nature; and I know no name more proper for this than *affection*.

Taking affection therefore in this extensive sense, our affections are very naturally divided into benevolent and malevolent, according as they imply our being well or ill affected towards their object.

There are some things common to all benevolent affections, others wherein they differ.

They differ both in the feeling, or sensation, which is an ingredient in all of them, and in the objects to which they are directed.

They all agree in two things, to wit; That the feeling which accompanies them is agreeable; and that they imply a desire of good and happiness to their object.

The affection we bear to a parent, to a child, to a benefactor, to a person in distress, to a mistress, differ not more in their object, than in the feelings they produce in the mind. We have not names to express the differences of these feelings, but every man is conscious of a difference. Yet, with all this difference, they agree in being agreeable feelings.

I know no exception to this rule, if we diſtinguiſh, as we ought, the feeling which naturally and neceſſarily attends the kind affection, from thoſe which accidentally, in certain circumſtances, it may produce.

The parental affection is an agreeable feeling; but it makes the misfortune or miſbehaviour of a child give a deeper wound to the mind. Pity is an agreeable feeling, yet diſtreſs, which we are not able to relieve, may give a painful ſympathy. Love to one of the other ſex is an agreeable feeling; but where it does not meet with a proper return, it may give the moſt pungent diſtreſs.

The joy and comfort of human life conſiſts in the reciprocal exerciſe of kind affections, and without them life would be undeſirable.

It has been obſerved by Lord SHAFTESBURY, and by many other judicious moraliſts, That even the epicure and the debauchee, who are thought to place all their happineſs in the gratifications of ſenſe, and to purſue theſe as their only object, can find no reliſh in ſolitary indulgences of this kind, but in thoſe only that are mixed with ſocial intercourſe, and a reciprocal exchange of kind affections.

CICERO has obſerved, that the word *convivium*, which in Latin ſignifies a feaſt, is not borrowed from eating or from drinking, but from that ſocial intercourſe which, being the chief part of ſuch

ſuch an entertainment, gives the name to the whole.

Mutual kind affections are undoubtedly the balm of life, and of all the enjoyments commoñ to good and bad men, are the chief. If a man had no perſon whom he loved or eſteemed, no perſon who loved or eſteemed him, how wretched muſt his condition be! Surely a man capable of reflection would chooſe to paſs out of exiſtence, rather than to live in ſuch a ſtate.

It has been, by the Poets, repreſented as the ſtate of ſome bloody and barbarous tyrants; but Poets are allowed to paint a little beyond the life. ATREUS is repreſented as ſaying, *Oderint dum metuunt.* "I care not for their hatred, pro-"viding they dread my power." I believe there never was a man ſo diſpoſed towards all mankind. The moſt odious tyrant that ever was, will have his favourites, whoſe affection he endeavours to deſerve or to bribe, and to whom he bears ſome good will.

We may therefore lay it down as a principle, that all benevolent affections are, in their nature, agreeable; and that, next to a good conſcience, to which they are always friendly, and never can be adverſe, they make the capital part of human happineſs.

Another ingredient eſſential to every benevolent affection, and from which it takes the name, is a deſire of the good and happineſs of the object.

The object of benevolent affection therefore, muſt be ſome being capable of happineſs. When we ſpeak of affection to a houſe, or to any inanimate thing, the word has a different meaning. For that which has no capacity of enjoyment, or of ſuffering, may be an object of liking or diſguſt, but cannot poſſibly be an object either of benevolent or malevolent affection.

A thing may be deſired either on its own account, or as the means in order to ſomething elſe. That only can properly be called an object of deſire, which is deſired upon its own account; and it is only ſuch deſires that I call principles of action. When any thing is deſired as the means only, there muſt be an end for which it is deſired; and the deſire of the end is, in this caſe, the principle of action. The means are deſired only as they tend to that end; and if different, or even contrary means tended to the ſame end, they would be equally deſired.

On this account I conſider thoſe affections only as benevolent, where the good of the object is deſired ultimately, and not as the means only, in order to ſomething elſe.

To ſay that we deſire the good of others, only in order to procure ſome pleaſure or good to ourſelves, is to ſay that there is no benevolent affection in human nature.

This indeed has been the opinion of ſome Philoſophers, both in ancient and in later times. I intend not to examine this opinion in this place, conceiving

conceiving it proper to give that view of the principles of action in man, which appears to me to be juſt, before I examine the ſyſtems wherein they have been miſtaken or miſrepreſented.

I obſerve only at preſent, that it appears as unreaſonable to reſolve all our benevolent affections into ſelf-love, as it would be to reſolve hunger and thirſt into ſelf-love.

Theſe appetites are neceſſary for the preſervation of the individual. Benevolent affections are no leſs neceſſary for the preſervation of ſociety among men, without which man would become an eaſy prey to the beaſts of the field.

We are placed in this world, by the Author of our being, ſurrounded with many objects that are neceſſary or uſeful to us, and with many that may hurt us. We are led, not by reaſon and ſelf-love only, but by many inſtincts, and appetites, and natural deſires, to ſeek the former and to avoid the latter.

But of all the things of this world, man may be the moſt uſeful, or the moſt hurtful to man. Every man is in the power of every man with whom he lives. Every man has power to do much good to his fellow-men, and to do more hurt.

We cannot live without the ſociety of men; and it would be impoſſible to live in ſociety, if men were not diſpoſed to do much of that good to men, and but little of that hurt, which it is in their power to do.

But how ſhall this end, ſo neceſſary to the exiſtence of human ſociety, and conſequently to the exiſtence of the human ſpecies, be accompliſhed?

If we judge from analogy, we muſt conclude, that in this, as in other parts of our conduct, our rational principles are aided by principles of an inferior order, ſimilar to thoſe by which many brute-animals live in ſociety with their ſpecies; and that by means of ſuch principles, that degree of regularity is obſerved, which we find in all ſocieties of men, whether wiſe or fooliſh, virtuous or vicious.

The benevolent affections planted in human nature, appear therefore no leſs neceſſary for the preſervation of the human ſpecies, than the appetites of hunger and thirſt.

CHAP. IV.

Of the particular Benevolent Affections.

HAVING premiſed theſe things in general concerning benevolent affections, I ſhall now attempt ſome enumeration of them.

1. The *firſt* I mention is that of parents and children, and other near relations.

This we commonly call *natural* affection. Every language has a name for it. It is common to us with moſt of the brute-animals; and is variouſly

riouſly modified in different animals, according as it is more or leſs neceſſary for the preſervation of the ſpecies.

Many of the inſect-tribe need no other care of parents, than that the eggs be laid in a proper place, where they ſhall have neither too little nor too much heat, and where the animal, as ſoon as it is hatched, ſhall find its natural food. This care the parent takes, and no more.

In other tribes, the young muſt be lodged in ſome ſecret place, where they cannot be eaſily diſcovered by their enemies. They muſt be cheriſhed by the warmth of the parent's body. They muſt be ſuckled, and fed at firſt with tender food; attended in their excurſions, and guarded from danger, till they have learned by experience, and by the example of their parents, to provide for their own ſubſiſtence and ſafety. With what aſſiduity and tender affection this is done by the parents, in every ſpecies that requires it, is well known.

The eggs of the feathered tribe are commonly hatched by incubation of the dam, who leaves off at once her ſprightly motions and migrations, and confines herſelf to her ſolitary and painful taſk, cheered by the ſong of her mate upon a neighbouring bough, and ſometimes fed by him, ſometimes relieved in her incubation, while ſhe gathers a ſcanty meal, and with the greateſt diſpatch returns to her poſt.

The young birds of many ſpecies are ſo very tender and delicate, that man, with all his wiſdom and experience, would not be able to rear one to maturity. But the parents, without any experience, know perfectly how to rear ſometimes a dozen or more at one brood, and to give every one its portion in due ſeaſon. They know the food beſt ſuited to their delicate conſtitution; which is ſometimes afforded by Nature, ſometimes muſt be cooked and half digeſted in the ſtomach of the parent.

In ſome animals, Nature hath furniſhed the female with a kind of ſecond womb, into which the young retire occaſionally, for food, warmth, and the conveniency of being carried about with the mother.

It would be endleſs to recount all the various ways in which the parental affection is expreſſed by brute animals.

He muſt, in my apprehenſion, have a very ſtrange complexion of underſtanding, who can ſurvey the various ways in which the young of the various ſpecies are reared, without wonder, without pious admiration of that manifold Wiſdom, which hath ſo ſkilfully fitted means to ends, in ſuch an infinite variety of ways.

In all the brute-animals we are acquainted with, the end of the parental affection is completely anſwered in a ſhort time; and then it ceaſes as if it had never been.

The

The infancy of man is longer and more helpleſs than that of any other animal. The parental affection is neceſſary for many years; it is highly uſeful through life; and therefore it terminates only with life. It extends to children's children without any diminution of its force.

How common is it to ſee a young woman, in the gayeſt period of life, who has ſpent her days in mirth, and her nights in profound ſleep, without ſolicitude or care, all at once transformed into the careful, the ſolicitous, the watchful nurſe of her dear infant: doing nothing by day but gazing upon it, and ſerving it in the meaneſt offices; by night, depriving herſelf of ſound ſleep for months, that it may lie ſafe in her arms. Forgetful of herſelf, her whole care is centered in this little object.

Such a ſudden transformation of her whole habits, and occupation, and turn of mind, if we did not ſee it every day, would appear a more wonderful *metamorphoſis* than any that OVID has deſcribed.

This, however, is the work of nature, and not the effect of reaſon and reflection. For we ſee it in the good and in the bad, in the moſt thoughtleſs, as well as in the thoughtful.

Nature has aſſigned different departments to the father and mother in rearing their offspring. This may be ſeen in many brute-animals; and that it is ſo in the human ſpecies, was long ago obſerved by SOCRATES, and moſt beautifully illuſtrated

luſtrated by him, as we learn from XENOPHON's *Oeconomicks*. The parental affection in the different ſexes is exactly adapted to the office aſſigned to each. The father would make an aukward nurſe to a new-born child, and the mother too indulgent a guardian. But both act with propriety and grace in their proper ſphere.

It is very remarkable, that when the office of rearing a child is transferred from the parent to another perſon, Nature ſeems to transfer the affection along with the office. A wet nurſe, or even a dry nurſe, has commonly the ſame affection for her nurſling, as if ſhe had born it. The fact is ſo well known that nothing needs be ſaid to confirm it; and it ſeems to be the work of Nature.

Our affections are not immediately in our power, as our outward actions are. Nature has directed them to certain objects. We may do kind offices without affection; but we cannot create an affection which Nature has not given.

Reaſon might teach a man that his children are particularly committed to his care by the providence of GOD, and, on that account, that he ought to attend to them as his particular charge; but reaſon could not teach him to love them more than other children of equal merit, or to be more afflicted for their misfortunes or miſbehaviour.

It is evident, therefore, that that peculiar ſenſibility of affection, with regard to his own children,

dren, is not the effect of reaſoning or reflection, but the effect of that conſtitution which Nature has given him.

There are ſome affections which we may call *rational*, becauſe they are grounded upon an opinion of merit in the object. The parental affection is not of this kind. For though a man's affection to his child may be increaſed by merit, and diminiſhed by demerit, I think no man will ſay, that it took its riſe from an opinion of merit. It is not opinion that creates the affection, but affection often creates opinion. It is apt to pervert the judgment, and create an opinion of merit where there is none.

The abſolute neceſſity of this parental affection, in order to the continuance of the human ſpecies, is ſo apparent, that there is no need of arguments to prove it. The rearing of a child from its birth to maturity requires ſo much time and care, and ſuch infinite attentions, that, if it were to be done merely from conſiderations of reaſon and duty, and were not ſweetened by affection in parents, nurſes and guardians, there is reaſon to doubt, whether one child in ten thouſand would ever be reared.

Beſide the abſolute neceſſity of this part of the human conſtitution to the preſervation of the ſpecies, its utility is very great, for tempering the giddineſs and impetuoſity of youth, and improving its knowledge by the prudence and experience

perience of age, for encouraging induſtry and frugality in the parents, in order to provide for their children, for the ſolace and ſupport of parents under the infirmities of old age; not to mention that it probably gave riſe to the firſt civil governments.

It does not appear that the parental, and other family affections, are, in general, either too ſtrong or too weak for anſwering their end. If they were too weak, parents would be moſt apt to err on the ſide of undue ſeverity; if too ſtrong, of undue indulgence. As they are in fact, I believe no man can ſay, that the errors are more general on on ſide than on the other.

When theſe affections are exerted according to their intention, under the direction of wiſdom and prudence, the economy of ſuch a family is a moſt delightful ſpectacle, and furniſhes the moſt agreeable and affecting ſubject to the pencil of the painter, and to the pen of the orator and poet.

2. The *next* benevolent affection I mention is gratitude to benefactors.

That good offices are, by the very conſtitution of our nature, apt to produce good-will towards the benefactor, in good and bad men, in the ſavage and in the civilized, cannot ſurely be denied by any one, in the leaſt acquainted with human nature.

The danger of perverting a man's judgment by good deeds, where he ought to have no bias, is ſo well known, that it is diſhonourable in judges,

judges, in witneſſes, in electors to offices of truſt, to accept of them; and, in all civilized nations, they are, in ſuch caſes, prohibited, as the means of corruption.

Thoſe who would corrupt the ſentence of a judge, the teſtimony of a witneſs, or the vote of an elector, know well, that they muſt not make a bargain, or ſtipulate what is to be done in return. This would ſhock every man who has the leaſt pretenſion to morals. If the perſon can only be prevailed upon to accept the good office, as a teſtimony of pure and diſintereſted friendſhip, it is left to work upon his gratitude. He finds himſelf under a kind of moral obligation to conſider the cauſe of his benefactor and friend in the moſt favourable light. He finds it eaſier to juſtify his conduct to himſelf, by favouring the intereſt of his benefactor, than by oppoſing it.

Thus the principle of gratitude is ſuppoſed, even in the nature of a bribe. Bad men know how to make this natural principle the moſt effectual means of corruption. The very beſt things may be turned to a bad uſe. But the natural tendency of this principle, and the intention of Nature in planting it in the human breaſt, are, evidently, to promote good-will among men, and to give to good offices the power of multiplying their kind, like ſeed ſown in the earth, which brings a return, with increaſe.

Whether there be, or be not, in the more ſagacious brutes, ſomething that may be called gratitude,

gratitude, I will not diſpute. We muſt allow this important difference between their gratitude and that of the humand kind, that, in the laſt, the mind of the benefactor is chiefly regarded, in the firſt, the external action only. A brute-animal will be as kindly affected to him who feeds it in order to kill and eat it, as to him who does it from affection.

A man may be juſtly entitled to our gratitude, for an office that is uſeful, though it be, at the ſame, diſagreeable; and not only for doing, but for forbearing what he had a right to do. Among men, it is not every beneficial office that claims our gratitude, but ſuch only as are not due to us in juſtice. A favour alone gives a claim to gratitude; and a favour muſt be ſomething more than juſtice requires. It does not appear that brutes have any conception of juſtice. They can neither diſtinguiſh hurt from injury, nor a favour from a good office that is due.

3. A *third* natural benevolent affection is, pity and compaſſion towards the diſtreſſed.

Of all perſons, thoſe in diſtreſs ſtand moſt in need of our good offices. And, for that reaſon, the Author of Nature hath planted in the breaſt of every human creature a powerful advocate to plead their cauſe.

In man, and in ſome other animals, there are ſigns of diſtreſs, which Nature hath both taught them to uſe, and taught all men to underſtand without any interpreter. Theſe natural ſigns

are

are more eloquent than language; they move our hearts, and produce a ſympathy, and a deſire to give relief.

There are few hearts ſo hard, but great diſtreſs will conquer their anger, their indignation, and every malevolent affection.

We ſympathiſe even with the traitor and with the aſſaſſin, when we ſee him led to execution. It is only ſelf-preſervation, and the public good, that makes us reluctantly aſſent to his being cut off from among men.

The practice of the Canadian nations toward their priſoners would tempt one to think, that they have been able to root out the principle of compaſſion from their nature. But this, I apprehend, would be a raſh concluſion. It is only a part of the priſoners of war that they devote to a cruel death. This gratifies the revenge of the women and children who have loſt their huſbands and fathers in the war. The other priſoners are kindly uſed, and adopted as brethren.

Compaſſion with bodily pain is no doubt weakened among theſe ſavages, becauſe they are trained from their infancy to be ſuperior to death, and to every degree of pain; and he is thought unworthy of the name of a man, who cannot defy his tormentors, and ſing his death-ſong in the midſt of the moſt cruel tortures. He who can do this, is honoured as a brave man, though an enemy. But he muſt periſh in the experiment.

A Canadian has the moſt perfect contempt for every man who thinks pain an intolerable evil. And nothing is ſo apt to ſtifle compaſſion as contempt, and an apprehenſion, that the evil ſuffered is nothing but what ought to be manfully borne.

It muſt alſo be obſerved, that ſavages ſet no bounds to their revenge. Thoſe who find no protection in laws and government never think themſelves ſafe, but in the deſtruction of their enemy. And one of the chief advantages of civil government is, that it tempers the cruel paſſion of revenge, and opens the heart to compaſſion with every human woe.

It ſeems to be falſe religion only, that is able to check the tear of compaſſion.

We are told, that, in Portugal and Spain, a man condemned to be burned as an obſtinate heretick, meets with no compaſſion, even from the multitude. It is true, they are taught to look upon him as an enemy to GOD, and doomed to hell-fire. But ſhould not this very circumſtance move compaſſion? Surely it would, if they were not taught, that, in this caſe, it is a crime to ſhew compaſſion, or even to feel it.

4. A *fourth* benevolent affection is, eſteem of the wiſe and the good.

The worſt men cannot avoid feeling this in ſome degree. Eſteem, veneration, devotion, are different degrees of the ſame affection. The perfection of wiſdom, power and goodneſs, which belongs

belongs only to the ALMIGHTY, is the object of the laſt.

It may be a doubt, whether this principle of eſteem, as well as that of gratitude, ought to be ranked in the order of animal principles, or if they ought not rather to be placed in a higher order. They are certainly more allied to the rational nature than the others that have been named; nor is it evident, that there is any thing in brute-animals that deſerves the ſame name.

There is indeed a ſubordination in a herd of cattle, and in a flock of ſheep, which, I believe, is determined by ſtrength and courage, as it is among ſavage tribes of men. I have been informed, that, in a pack of hounds, a ſtanch hound acquires a degree of eſteem in the pack; ſo that, when the dogs are wandering in queſt of the ſcent, if he opens, the pack immediately cloſes in with him, when they would not regard the opening of a dog of no reputation. This is ſomething like a reſpect to wiſdom.

But I have placed eſteem of the wiſe and good in the order of animal principles, not from any perſuaſion that it is to be found in brute-animals, but becauſe, I think, it appears in the moſt unimproved and in the moſt degenerate part of our ſpecies, even in thoſe in whom we hardly perceive any exertion, either of reaſon or virtue.

I will not, however, diſpute with any man who thinks that it deſerves a more honourable name than that of an animal principle. It is of

ſmall importance what name we give it, if we are ſatisfied that there is ſuch a principle in the human conſtitution.

5. Friendſhip is another benevolent affection. Of this we have ſome inſtances famous in hiſtory: Few indeed; but ſufficient to ſhew, that human nature is ſuſceptible of that extraordinary attachment, ſympathy and affection, to one or a few perſons, which the ancients thought alone worthy of the name of friendſhip.

The Epicureans found it very difficult to reconcile the exiſtence of friendſhip to the principles of their ſect. They were not ſo bold as to deny its exiſtence. They even boaſted that there had been more attachments of that kind between Epicureans than in any other ſect. But the difficulty was, to account for real friendſhip upon Epicurean principles. They went into different hypotheſes upon this point, three of which are explained by TORQUATUS the Epicurean, in CICERO's book, *De Finibus*.

CICERO, in his reply to TORQUATUS, examines all the three, and ſhews them all to be either inconſiſtent with the nature of true friendſhip, or inconſiſtent with the fundamental principles of the Epicurean ſect.

As to the friendſhip which the Epicureans boaſted of among thoſe of their ſect, CICERO does not queſtion the fact, but obſerves, that, as there are many whoſe practice is worſe than their principles, ſo there are ſome whoſe principles

are

are worſe than their practice, and that the bad principles of theſe Epicureans were overcome by the goodneſs of their nature.

6. Among the benevolent affections, the paſſion of love between the ſexes cannot be overlooked.

Although it is commonly the theme of Poets, it is not unworthy of the pen of the Philoſopher, as it is a moſt important part of the human conſtitution.

It is no doubt made up of various ingredients, as many other principles of action are, but it certainly cannot exiſt without a very ſtrong benevolent affection toward its object; in whom it finds, or conceives, every thing that is amiable and excellent, and even ſomething more than human. I conſider it here, only as a benevolent affection natural to man. And that it is ſo, no man can doubt who ever felt its force.

It is evidently intended by Nature to direct a man in the choice of a mate, with whom he deſires to live, and to rear an offſpring.

It has effectually ſecured this end in all ages, and in every ſtate of ſociety.

The paſſion of love, and the parental affection, are counterparts to each other; and when they are conducted with prudence, and meet with a proper return, are the ſource of all domeſtic felicity, the greateſt, next to that of a good conſcience, which this world affords.

As, in the preſent ſtate of things, pain often dwells near to pleaſure, and ſorrow to joy, it needs not be thought ſtrange, that a paſſion, fitted and intended by Nature to yield the greateſt worldly felicity, ſhould, by being ill regulated, or wrong directed, prove the occaſion of the moſt pungent diſtreſs.

But its joys and its griefs, its different modifications in the different ſexes, and its influence upon the character of both, though very important ſubjects, are fitter to be ſung than ſaid; and I leave them to thoſe who have ſlept upon the two-topped Parnaſſus.

7. The *laſt* benevolent affection I ſhall mention is, what we commonly call *public ſpirit*, that is, an affection to any community to which we belong.

If there be any man quite deſtitute of this affection, he muſt be as great a monſter as a man born with two heads. Its effects are manifeſt in the whole of human life, and in the hiſtory of all nations.

The ſituation of a great part of mankind, indeed, is ſuch, that their thoughts and views muſt be confined within a very narrow ſphere, and be very much engroſſed by their private concerns. With regard to an extenſive public, ſuch as a ſtate or nation, they are like a drop to the ocean, ſo that they have rarely an opportunity of acting with a view to it.

In

In many, whoſe actions may affect the public, and whoſe rank and ſtation lead them to think of it, private paſſions may be an overmatch for public ſpirit. All that can be inferred from this is, that their public ſpirit is weak, not that it does not exiſt.

If a man wiſhes well to the public, and is ready to do good to it rather than hurt, when it coſts him nothing, he has ſome affection to it, though it may be ſcandalouſly weak in degree.

I believe every man has it in one degree or another. What man is there who does not reſent ſatyrical reflections upon his country, or upon any community of which he is a member?

Whether the affection be to a college or to a cloiſter, to a clan or to a profeſſion, to a party or to a nation, it is public ſpirit. Theſe affections differ, not in kind, but in the extent of their object.

The object extends as our connections extend; and a ſenſe of the connection carries the affection along with it to every community to which we can apply the pronouns *we* and *our*.

> Friend, parent, neighbour, firſt it will embrace,
> His country next, and then all human race. POPE.

Even in the miſanthrope, this affection is not extinguiſhed. It is overpowered by the apprehenſion he has of the worthleſſneſs, the baſeneſs, and the ingratitude of mankind. Convince him,

that there is any amiable quality in the ſpecies, and immediately his philanthropy revives, and rejoices to find an object on which it can exert itſelf.

Public ſpirit has this in common with every ſubordinate principle of action, that, when it is not under the government of reaſon and virtue, it may produce much evil as well as good. Yet, where there is leaſt of reaſon and virtue, to regulate it, its good far overbalances its ill.

It ſometimes kindles or inflames animoſities between communities, or contending parties, and makes them treat each other with little regard to juſtice. It kindles wars between nations, and makes them deſtroy one another for trifling cauſes. But, without it, ſociety could not ſubſiſt, and every community would be a rope of ſand.

When under the direction of reaſon and virtue, it is the very image of GOD in the ſoul. It diffuſes its benign influence as far as its power extends, and participates in the happineſs of GOD, and of the whole creation.

Theſe are the benevolent affections which appear to me to be parts of the human conſtitution.

If any one thinks the enumeration incomplete, and that there are natural benevolent affections, which are not included under any of thoſe that have been named, I ſhall very readily liſten to ſuch

ſuch a correction, being ſenſible that ſuch enumerations are very often incomplete.

If others ſhould think that any, or all, the affections I have named, are acquired by education, or by habits and aſſociations grounded on ſelf-love, and are not original parts of our conſtitution; this is a point upon which, indeed, there has been much ſubtile diſputation in ancient and modern times, and which, I believe, muſt be determined from what a man, by careful reflection, may feel in himſelf, rather than from what he obſerves in others. But I decline entering into this diſpute, till I ſhall have explained that principle of action which we commonly call *ſelf-love*.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with ſome reflections upon the benevolent affections.

The *firſt* is, That all of them, in as far as they are benevolent, in which view only I conſider them, agree very much in the conduct they diſpoſe us to, with regard to their objects.

They diſpoſe us to do them good as far as we have power and opportunity; to wiſh them well, when we can do them no good; to judge favourably, and often partially, of them; to ſympathiſe with them in their afflictions and calamities; and to rejoice with them in their happineſs and good fortune.

It is impoſſible that there can be benevolent affection without ſympathy, both with the good and bad fortune of the object; and it appears

to be impoſſible that there can be ſympathy without benevolent affection. Men do not ſympathiſe with one whom they hate; nor even with one to whoſe good or ill they are perfectly indifferent.

We may ſympathiſe with a perfect ſtranger, or even with an enemy whom we ſee in diſtreſs; but this is the effect of pity; and if we did not pity him, we ſhould not ſympathiſe with him.

I take notice of this the rather, becauſe a very ingenious author in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, gives a very different account of the origin of ſympathy. It appears to me to be the effect of benevolent affection, and to be inſeparable from it.

A *ſecond* reflection is, That the conſtitution of our nature very powerfully invites us to cheriſh and cultivate in our minds the benevolent affections.

The agreeable feeling which always attends them as a preſent reward, appears to be intended by Nature for this purpoſe.

Benevolence, from its nature, compoſes the mind, warms the heart, enlivens the whole frame, and brightens every feature of the countenance. It may juſtly be ſaid to be medicinal both to ſoul and body. We are bound to it by duty; we are invited to it by intereſt; and becauſe both theſe cords are often feeble, we have natural kind affections to aid them in their operation,

and

and ſupply their defects; and theſe affections are joined with a manly pleaſure in their exertion.

A *third* reflection is, That the natural benevolent affections furniſh the moſt irreſiſtible proof, that the Author of our nature intended that we ſhould live in ſociety, and do good to our fellow-men as we have opportunity; ſince this great and important part of the human conſtitution has a manifeſt relation to ſociety, and can have no exerciſe nor uſe in a ſolitary ſtate.

The *laſt* reflection is, That the different principles of action have different degrees of dignity, and riſe one above another in our eſtimation, when we make them objects of contemplation.

We aſcribe no dignity to inſtincts or to habits. They lead us only to admire the wiſdom of the Creator, in adapting them ſo perfectly to the manner of life of the different animals in which they are found. Much the ſame may be ſaid of appetites. They ſerve rather for uſe than ornament.

The deſires of knowledge, of power, and of eſteem, riſe higher in our eſtimation, and we conſider them as giving dignity and ornament to man. The actions proceeding from them, though not properly virtuous, are manly and reſpectable, and claim a juſt ſuperiority over thoſe that proceed merely from appetite. This I think is the uniform judgment of mankind.

If

If we apply the kind of judgment to our ſame benevolent affections, they appear not only manly and reſpectable, but amiable in a high degree.

They are amiable even in brute-animals. We love the meekneſs of the lamb, the gentleneſs of the dove, the affection of a dog to his maſter. We cannot, without pleaſure, obſerve the timid ewe, who never ſhewed the leaſt degree of courage in her own defence, become valiant and intrepid in defence of her lamb, and boldly aſſault thoſe enemies, the very ſight of whom was wont to put her to flight.

How pleaſant is it to ſee the family economy of a pair of little birds in rearing their tender offſpring; the conjugal affection and fidelity of the parents; their cheerful toil and induſtry in providing food to their family; their ſagacity in concealing their habitation; the arts they uſe, often at the peril of their own lives, to decoy hawks, and other enemies, from their dwelling-place, and the affliction they feel when ſome unlucky boy has robbed them of the dear pledges of their affection, and fruſtrated all their hopes of their riſing family?

If kind affection be amiable in brutes, it is not leſs ſo in our own ſpecies. Even the external ſigns of it have a powerful charm.

Every one knows that a perſon of accompliſhed good breeding, charms every one he converſes with. And what is this good breeding? If we analyze it, we ſhall find it to be made up of looks,

looks, geſtures and ſpeeches, which are the natural ſigns of benevolence and good affection. He who has got the habit of uſing theſe ſigns with propriety, and without meanneſs, is a well-bred and a polite man.

What is that beauty in the features of the face, particularly of the fair ſex, which all men love and admire? I believe it conſiſts chiefly in the features which indicate good affections. Every indication of meekneſs, gentleneſs, and benignity, is a beauty. On the contrary, every feature that indicates pride, paſſion, envy, and malignity, is a deformity.

Kind affections, therefore, are amiable in brutes. Even the ſigns and ſhadows of them are highly attractive in our own ſpecies. Indeed they are the joy and the comfort of human life, not to good men only, but even to the vicious and diſſolute.

Without ſociety, and the intercourſe of kind affection, man is a gloomly, melancholy and joyleſs being. His mind oppreſſed with cares and fears, he cannot enjoy the balm of ſound ſleep: in conſtant dread of impending danger, he ſtarts at the ruſtling of a leaf. His ears are continuall upon the ſtretch, and every zephyr brings ſome ſound that alarms him.

When he enters into ſociety, and feels ſecurity in the good affection of friend and neighbours, it is then only that his fear vaniſhes, and his mind is at eaſe. His courage is raiſed his underſtanding

derſtanding is enlightened, and his heart dilates with joy.

Human ſociety may be compared to a heap of embers, which when placed aſunder, can retain neither their light nor heat, amidſt the ſurrounding elements; but when brought together they mutually give heat and light to each other; the flame breaks forth, and not only defends itſelf, but ſubdues every thing around it.

The ſecurity, the happineſs, and the ſtrength of human ſociety, ſpring ſolely from the reciprocal benevolent affections of its members.

The benevolent affections, though they be all honourable and lovely, are not all equally ſo. There is a ſubordination among them; and the honour we pay to them generally correſponds to the extent of their object.

The good huſband, the good father, the good friend, the good neighbour, we honour as a good man, worthy of our love and affection. But the man in whom theſe more private affections are ſwallowed up in zeal for the good of his country, and of mankind, who goes about doing good, and ſeeks opportunities of being uſeful to his ſpecies, we revere as more than a good man, as a hero, as a good angel.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of Malevolent Affection.

ARE there, in the conſtitution of man, any affections that may be called *malevolent?* What are they? And what is their uſe and end?

To me there ſeem to be two, which we may call by that name. They are emulation and reſentment. Theſe I take to be parts of the human conſtitution, given us by our Maker for good ends, and, when properly directed and regulated, of excellent uſe. But, as their exceſs or abuſe, to which human nature is very prone, is the ſource and ſpring of all the malevolence that is to be found among men, it is on that account I call them malevolent.

If any man thinks that they deſerve a ſofter name, ſince they may be exerciſed according to the intention of Nature, without malevolence, to this I have no objection.

By emulation, I mean, a deſire of ſuperiority to our rivals in any purſuit, accompanied with an uneaſineſs at being ſurpaſſed.

Human life has juſtly been compared to a race. The prize is ſuperiority in one kind or another. But the ſpecies or forms (if I may uſe the expreſſion) of ſuperiority among men are infinitely diverſified.

There

There is no man ſo contemptible in his own eyes, as to hinder him from entering the liſts in one form or another; and he will always find competitors to rival him in his own way.

We ſee emulation among brute-animals. Dogs and horſes contend each with his kind in the race. Many animals of the gregarious kind contend for ſuperiority in their flock or herd, and ſhew manifeſt ſigns of jealouſy when others pretend to rival them.

The emulation of the brute-animals is moſtly confined to ſwiftneſs, or ſtrength, or favour with their females. But the emulation of the human kind has a much wider field.

In every profeſſion, and in every accompliſhment of body or mind, real or imaginary, there are rivalſhips. Literary men rival one another in literary abilities. Artiſts in their ſeveral arts. The fair ſex in their beauty and attractions, and in the reſpect paid them by the other ſex.

In every political ſociety, from a petty corporation up the national adminiſtration, there is a rivalſhip for power and influence.

Men have a natural deſire of power without reſpect to the power of others. This we call *ambition*. But the deſire of ſuperiority, either in power, or in any thing we think worthy of eſtimation, has a reſpect to rivals, and is what we properly call *emulation*.

The ſtronger the deſire is, the more pungent will be the uneaſineſs of being found behind, and the

the mind will be the more hurt by this humiliating view.

Emulation has a manifeſt tendency to improvement. Without it life would ſtagnate, and the diſcoveries of art and genius would be at a ſtand. This principle produces a conſtant fermentation in ſociety, by which, though dregs may be produced, the better part is purified and exalted to a perfection, which it could not otherwiſe attain.

We have not ſufficient *data* for a compariſon of the good and bad effects which this principle actually produces in ſociety; but there is ground to think of this, as of other natural principles, that the good overbalances the ill. As far as it is under the dominion of reaſon and virtue, its effects are always good; when left to be guided by paſſion and folly, they are often very bad.

Reaſon directs us to ſtrive for ſuperiority, only in things that have real excellence, otherwiſe we ſpend our labour for that which profiteth not. To value ourſelves for ſuperiority in things that have no real worth, or none, compared with what they coſt, is to be vain of our own folly; and to be uneaſy at the ſuperiority of others in ſuch things, is no leſs ridiculous.

Reaſon directs us to ſtrive for ſuperiority only in things in our power, and attainable by our exertion, otherwiſe we ſhall be like the frog in the fable, who ſwelled herſelf till ſhe burſt, in order to equal the ox in magnitude.

To

To check all deſire of things not attainable, and every uneaſy thought in the want of them, is an obvious dictate of prudence, as well as of virtue and religion.

If emulation be regulated by ſuch maxims of reaſon, and all undue partiality to ourſelves be laid aſide, it will be a powerful principle of our improvement, without hurt to any other perſon. It will give ſtrength to the nerves, and vigour to the mind, in every noble and manly purſuit.

But diſmal are its effects, when it is not under the direction of reaſon and virtue. It has often the moſt malignant influence on mens opinions, on their affections, and on their actions.

It is an old obſervation, that affection follows opinion; and it is undoubtedly true in many caſes. A man cannot be grateful without the opinion of a favour done him. He cannot have deliberate reſentment without the opinion of an injury; nor eſteem without the opinion of ſome eſtimable quality; nor compaſſion without the opinion of ſuffering.

But it is no leſs true, that opinion ſometimes follows affection, not that it ought, but that it actually does ſo, by giving a falſe bias to our judgment. We are apt to be partial to our friends, and ſtill more to ourſelves.

Hence the deſire of ſuperiority leads men to put an undue eſtimation upon thoſe things wherein they excel, or think they excel. And,

by

by this means, pride may feed itſelf upon the very dregs of human nature.

The ſame deſire of ſuperiority may lead men to undervalue thoſe things wherein they either deſpair of excelling, or care not to make the exertion neceſſary for that end. The grapes are ſour, ſaid the fox, when he ſaw them beyond his reach. The ſame principle leads men to detract from the merit of others, and to impute their brighteſt actions to mean or bad motives.

He who runs a race feels uneaſineſs at ſeeing another outſtrip him. This is uncorrupted nature, and the work of GOD within him. But this uneaſineſs may produce either of two very different effects. It may incite him to make more vigorous exertions, and to ſtrain every nerve to get before his rival. This is fair and honeſt emulation. This is the effect it is intended to produce. But if he has not fairneſs and candour of heart, he will look with an evil eye upon his competitor, and will endeavour to trip him, or to throw a ſtumbling-block in his way. This is pure envy, the moſt malignant paſſion that can lodge in the human breaſt; which devours, as its natural food, the fame and the happineſs of thoſe who are moſt deſerving of our eſteem.

If there be, in ſome men, a proneneſs to detract from the character, even of perſons unknown or indifferent, in others an avidity to hear and to propagate ſcandal, to what prin-

ciple in human nature muſt we aſcribe theſe qualities? The failings of others ſurely add nothing to our worth, nor are they, in themſelves, a pleaſant ſubject of thought or of diſcourſe. But they flatter pride, by giving an opinion of our ſuperiority to thoſe from whom we detract.

Is it not poſſible, that the ſame deſire of ſuperiority may have ſome ſecret influence upon thoſe who love to diſplay their eloquence in declaiming upon the corruption of human nature, and the wickedneſs, fraud and inſincerity of mankind in general? It ought always to be taken for granted, that the declaimer is an exception to the general rule, otherwiſe he would rather chooſe, even for his own ſake, to draw a veil over the nakedneſs of his ſpecies. But hoping that his audience will be ſo civil as not to include him in the black deſcription, he riſes ſuperior by the depreſſion of the ſpecies, and ſtands alone, like NOAH in the antediluvian world. This looks like envy againſt the human race.

It would be endleſs, and no ways agreeable, to enumerate all the evils and all the vices which paſſion and folly beget upon emulation. Here, as in moſt caſes, the corruption of the beſt things is the worſt. In brute-animals, emulation has little matter to work upon, and its effects, good or bad, are few. It may produce battles of cocks and battles of bulls, and little elſe that is obſervable. But in mankind,

it

it has an infinity of matter to work upon, and its good or bad effects, according as it is well or ill regulated and directed, multiply in proportion.

The concluſion to be drawn from what has been ſaid upon this principle is, That emulation, as far as it is a part of our conſtitution, is highly uſeful and important in ſociety; that in the wiſe and good, it produces the beſt effects without any harm; but in the fooliſh and vicious, it is the parent of a great part of the evils of life, and of the moſt malignant vices that ſtain human nature.

We are next to conſider reſentment.

Nature diſpoſes us, when we are hurt, to reſiſt and retaliate. Beſides the bodily pain occaſioned by the hurt, the mind is ruffled, and a deſire raiſed to retaliate upon the author of the hurt or injury. This, in general, is what we call *anger* or *reſentment*.

A very important diſtinction is made by Biſhop BUTLER between ſudden reſentment, which is a blind impulſe ariſing from our conſtitution, and that which is deliberate. The firſt may be raiſed by hurt of any kind; but the laſt can only be raiſed by injury, real or conceived.

The ſame diſtinction is made by Lord KAMES in his *Elements of Criticiſm*. What BUTLER calls *ſudden*, he calls *inſtinctive*.

We have not, in common language, different names for theſe different kinds of reſentment;

but the diſtinction is very neceſſary, in order to our having juſt notions of this part of the human conſtitution. It correſponds perfectly with the diſtinction I have made between the animal and rational principles of action. For this ſudden or inſtinctive reſentment, is an animal principle common to us with brute-animals. But that reſentment which the authors I have named call *deliberate*, muſt fall under the claſs of rational principles.

It is to be obſerved, however, that, by referring it to that claſs, I do not mean, that it is always kept within the bounds that reaſon preſcribes, but only that it is proper to man as a reaſonable being, capable, by his rational faculties, of diſtinguiſhing between hurt and injury; a diſtinction which no brute-animal can make.

Both theſe kinds of reſentment are raiſed, whether the hurt or injury be done to ourſelves, or to thoſe we are intereſted in.

Wherever there is any benevolent affection towards others, we reſent their wrongs, in proportion to the ſtrength of our affection. Pity and ſympathy with the ſufferer, produce reſentment againſt the author of the ſuffering, as naturally as concern for ourſelves produces reſentment of our own wrongs.

I ſhall firſt conſider that reſentment which I call *animal*, which BUTLER calls *ſudden*, and Lord KAMES *inſtinctive*.

In

In every animal to which Nature hath given the power of hurting its enemy, we ſee an endeavour to retaliate the ill that is done to it. Even a mouſe will bite when it cannot run away.

Perhaps there may be ſome animals to whom Nature hath given no offenſive weapon. To ſuch, anger and reſentment would be of no uſe; and I believe we ſhall find, that they never ſhew any ſign of it. But there are few of this kind.

Some of the more ſagacious animals can be provoked to fierce anger, and retain it long. Many of them ſhew great animoſity in defending their young, who hardly ſhew any in defending themſelves. Others reſiſt every aſſault made upon the flock or herd to which they belong. Bees defend their hive, wild beaſts their den, and birds their neſt.

This ſudden reſentment operates in a ſimilar manner in men and in brutes, and appears to be given by Nature to both for the ſame end, namely, for defence, even in caſes where there is no time for deliberation. It may be compared to that natural inſtinct, by which a man, who has loſt his balance and begins to fall, makes a ſudden and violent effort to recover himſelf, without any intention or deliberation.

In ſuch efforts, men often exert a degree of muſcular ſtrength beyond what they are able to exert by a calm determination of the will, and

thereby ſave themſelves from many a dangerous fall.

By a like violent and ſudden impulſe, Nature prompts us to repel hurt upon the cauſe of it, whether it be man or beaſt. The inſtinct before mentioned is ſolely defenſive, and is prompted by fear. This ſudden reſentment is offenſive, and is prompted by anger, but with a view to defence.

Man, in his preſent ſtate, is ſurrounded with ſo many dangers from his own ſpecies, from brute-animals, from every thing around him, that he has need of ſome defenſive armour that ſhall always be ready in the moment of danger. His reaſon is of great uſe for this purpoſe, when there is time to apply it. But, in many caſes, the miſchief would be done before reaſon could think of the means of preventing it.

The wiſdom of Nature hath provided two means to ſupply this defect of our reaſon. One of theſe is the inſtinct before mentioned, by which the body, upon the appearance of danger, is inſtantly, and without thought or intention, put in that poſture which is proper for preventing the danger, or leſſening it. Thus, we wink hard when our eyes are threatened; we bend the body to avoid a ſtroke; we make a ſudden effort to recover our balance, when in danger of falling. By ſuch means we are guarded from many dangers which our reaſon would come too late to prevent.

But

But as offenſive arms are often the ſureſt means of defence, by deterring the enemy from an aſſault, Nature hath alſo provided man, and other animals, with this kind of defence, by that ſudden reſentment of which we now ſpeak, which outruns the quickeſt determinations of reaſon, and takes fire in an inſtant, threatening the enemy with retaliation.

The firſt of theſe principles operates upon the defender only; but this operates both upon the defender and the aſſailant, inſpiring the former with courage and animoſity, and ſtriking terror into the latter. It proclaims to all aſſailants, what our ancient Scottiſh kings did upon their coins, by the emblem of a thiſtle, with this motto, *Nemo me impune laceſſet.* By this, in innumerable caſes, men and beaſts are deterred from doing hurt, and others thereby ſecured from ſuffering it.

But as reſentment ſuppoſes an object on whom we may retaliate, how comes it to paſs, that in brutes very often, and ſometimes in our own ſpecies, we ſee it wreaked upon inanimate things, which are incapable of ſuffering by it?

Perhaps it might be a ſufficient anſwer to this queſtion, That Nature acts by general laws, which, in ſome particular caſes, may go beyond, or fall ſhort of their intention, though they be ever ſo well adapted to it in general.

But I confeſs it ſeems to me impoſſible, that there ſhould be reſentment againſt a thing, which

at that very moment is conſidered as inanimate, and conſequently incapable either of intending hurt, or of being puniſhed. For what can be more abſurd, than to be angry with the knife for cutting me, or with the weight for falling upon my toes? There muſt therefore, I conceive, be ſome momentary notion or conception that the object of our reſentment is capable of puniſhment; and if it be natural, before reflection, to be angry with things inanimate, it ſeems to be a neceſſary conſequence, that it is natural to think that they have life and feeling.

Several phænomena in human nature lead us to conjecture that, in the earlieſt period of life, we are apt to think every object about us to be animated. Judging of them by ourſelves, we aſcribe to them the feelings we are conſcious of in ourſelves. So we ſee a little girl judges of her doll and of her play-things. And ſo we ſee rude nations judge of the heavenly bodies, of the elements, and of the ſea, rivers, and fountains.

If this be ſo, it ought not to be ſaid, that by reaſon and experience, we learn to aſcribe life and intelligence to things which we before conſidered as inanimate. It ought rather to be ſaid, That by reaſon and experience we learn that certain things are inanimate, to which at firſt we aſcribed life and intelligence.

If this be true, it is leſs ſurpriſing that, before reflection, we ſhould for a moment relapſe into this prejudice of our early years, and treat things

things as if they had life, which we once believed to have it.

It does not much affect our preſent argument, whether this be, or be not the cauſe, why a dog purſues and gnaſhes at the ſtone that hurt him; and why a man in a paſſion, for loſing at play, ſometimes wreaks his vengeance on the cards or dice.

It is not ſtrange that a blind animal impulſe ſhould ſometimes loſe its proper direction. In brutes this has no bad conſequence; in men the leaſt ray of reflection corrects it, and ſhews its abſurdity.

It is ſufficiently evident, upon the whole, that this ſudden, or animal reſentment, is intended by Nature for our defence. It prevents miſchief by the fear of puniſhment. It is a kind of penal ſtatute, promulgated by Nature, the execution of which is committed to the ſufferer.

It may be expected indeed, that one who judges in his own cauſe, will be diſpoſed to ſeek more than an equitable redreſs. But this diſpoſition is checked by the reſentment of the other party.

Yet, in the ſtate of nature, injuries once begun, will often be reciprocated between the parties, until mortal enmity is produced, and each party thinks himſelf ſafe only in the deſtruction of his enemy.

This right of redreſſing and puniſhing our own wrongs, ſo apt to be abuſed, is one of thoſe natural

natural rights, which, in political ſociety, is given up to the laws, and to the civil magiſtrate; and this indeed is one of the capital advantages we reap from the political union, that the evils ariſing from ungoverned reſentment are in a great degree prevented.

Although deliberate reſentment does not properly belong to the claſs of animal principles; yet, as both have the ſame name, and are diſtinguiſhed only by Philoſophers, and as in real life they are commonly intermixed, I ſhall here make ſome remarks upon it.

A ſmall degree of reaſon and reflection teaches a man that injury only, and not mere hurt, is a juſt object of reſentment to a rational creature. A man may ſuffer grievouſly by the hand of another, not only without injury, but with the moſt friendly intention; as in the caſe of a painful chirurgical operation. Every man of common ſenſe ſees, that to reſent ſuch ſuffering, is not the part of a man, but of a brute.

Mr LOCKE mentions a gentleman who, having been cured of madneſs by a very harſh and offenſive operation, with great ſenſe of gratitude, owned the cure as the greateſt obligation he could have received, but could never bear the ſight of the operator, becauſe it brought back the idea of that agony which he had endured from his hands.

In this caſe we ſee diſtinctly the operation both of the animal, and of the rational principle. The firſt produced an averſion to the operator,

operator, which reaſon was not able to overcome; and probably in a weak mind, might have produced laſting reſentment and hatred. But, in this gentleman, reaſon ſo far prevailed, as to make him ſenſible that gratitude, and not reſentment, was due.

Suffering may give a bias to the judgment, and make us apprehend injury where no injury is done. But, I think, without an apprehenſion of injury, there can be no deliberate reſentment.

Hence, among enlightened nations, hoſtile armies fight without anger or reſentment. The vanquiſhed are not treated as offenders, but as brave men who have fought for their country unſucceſsfully, and who are entitled to every office of humanity conſiſtent with the ſafety of the conquerors.

If we analyze that deliberate reſentment which is proper to rational creatures, we ſhall find that though it agrees with that which is merely animal in ſome reſpects, it differs in others. Both are accompanied with an uneaſy ſenſation, which diſturbs the peace of the mind. Both prompt us to ſeek redreſs of our ſufferings, and ſecurity from harm. But, in deliberate reſentment, there muſt be an opinion of injury done or intended. And an opinion of injury implies an idea of juſtice, and conſequently a moral faculty.

The very notion of an injury is, that it is leſs than we may juſtly claim; as, on the contrary, the notion of a favour is, that it is more than

than we can juſtly claim. Whence it is evident, that juſtice is the ſtandard, by which both a favour, and an injury, are to be weighed and eſtimated. Their very nature and definition conſiſt in their exceeding or falling ſhort of this ſtandard. No man therefore, can have the idea either of a favour or of an injury, who has not the idea of juſtice.

That very idea of juſtice which enters into cool and deliberate reſentment, tends to reſtrain its exceſſes. For as there is injuſtice in doing an injury, ſo there is injuſtice in puniſhing it beyond meaſure.

To a man of candour and reflection, conſciouſneſs of the frailty of human nature, and that he has often ſtood in need of forgiveneſs himſelf, the pleaſure of renewing good underſtanding, after it has been interrupted, the inward approbation of a generous and forgiving diſpoſition, and even the irkſomeneſs and uneaſineſs of a mind ruffled by reſentment, plead ſtrongly againſt its exceſſes.

Upon the whole, when we conſider, That, on the one had, every benevolent affection is pleaſant in its nature, is health to the ſoul, and a cordial to the ſpirits; That Nature has made even the outward expreſſion of benevolent affections in the countenance, pleaſant to every beholder, and the chief ingredient of beauty in the *human face divine;* That, on the other hand, every malevolent affection, not only in its faulty exceſſes, but in its moderate degrees, is vexation and diſquiet

quiet to the mind, and even gives deformity to the countenance, it is evident that, by theſe ſignals, Nature loudly admoniſhes us to uſe the former as our daily bread, both for health and pleaſure, but to conſider the latter as a nauſeous medicine, which is never to be taken without neceſſity; and even then in no greater quantity than the neceſſity requires.

CHAP. VI.

Of Paſſion.

BEFORE I proceed to conſider the rational principles of action, it is proper to obſerve, that there are ſome things belonging to the mind, which have great influence upon human conduct, by exciting or allaying, inflaming or cooling the animal principles we have mentioned.

Three of this kind deſerve particular conſideration. I ſhall call them by the names of *paſſion, diſpoſition, and opinion.*

The meaning of the word *paſſion* is not preciſely aſcertained, either in common diſcourſe, or in the writings of Philoſophers.

I think it is commonly put to ſignify ſome agitation of mind, which is oppoſed to that ſtate of tranquillity and compoſure, in which a man is moſt maſter of himſelf.

The word πάθος, which anſwers to it in the Greek language, is, by CICERO, rendered by the word *perturbatio.*

It

It has always been conceived to bear analogy to a ſtorm at ſea, or to a tempeſt in the air. It does not therefore ſignify any thing in the mind that is conſtant and permanent, but ſomething that is occaſional, and has a limited duration, like a ſtorm or tempeſt.

Paſſion commonly produces ſenſible effects even upon the body. It changes the voice, the features, and the geſture. The external ſigns of paſſion have, in ſome caſes, a great reſemblance to thoſe of madneſs; in others, to thoſe of melancholy. It gives often a degree of muſcular force and agility to the body, far beyond what it poſſeſſes in calm moments.

The effects of paſſion upon the mind are not leſs remarkable. It turns the thoughts involuntarily to the objects related to it, ſo that a man can hardly think of any thing elſe. It gives often a ſtrange bias to the judgment, making a man quickſighted in every thing that tends to inflame his paſſion, and to juſtify it, but blind to every thing that tends to moderate and allay it. Like a magic lanthorn, it raiſes up ſpectres and apparitions that have no reality, and throws falſe colours upon every object. It can turn deformity into beauty, vice into virtue, and virtue into vice.

The ſentiments of a man under its influence will appear abſurd and ridiculous, not only to other men, but even to himſelf when the ſtorm is ſpent and is ſucceeded by a calm. Paſſion often gives a violent impulſe to the will, and makes

a man do what he knows he ſhall repent as long as he lives.

That ſuch are the effects of paſſion, I think all men agree. They have been deſcribed in lively colours by poets, orators and moraliſts, in all ages. But men have given more attention to the effects of paſſion than to its nature; and while they have copiouſly and elegantly deſcribed the former, they have not preciſely defined the latter.

The controverſy between the ancient Peripatetics and the Stoics, with regard to the paſſions, was probably owing to their affixing different meanings to the word. The one ſect maintained, that the paſſions are good, and uſeful parts of our conſtitution, while they are held under the government of reaſon. The other ſect, conceiving that nothing is to be called paſſion which does not, in ſome degree, cloud and darken the underſtanding, conſidered all paſſion as hoſtile to reaſon, and therefore maintained, that, in the wiſe man, paſſion ſhould have no exiſtence, but be utterly exterminated.

If both ſects had agreed about the definition of paſſion, they would probably have had no difference. But while one conſidered paſſion only as the cauſe of thoſe bad effects which it often produces, and the other conſidered it as fitted by Nature to produce good effects, while it is under ſubjection to reaſon, it does not appear that what one ſect juſtified, was the ſame thing which the other

other condemned. Both allowed that no dictate of paſſion ought to be followed in oppoſition to reaſon. Their difference therefore was verbal more than real, and was owing to their giving different meanings to the ſame word.

The preciſe meaning of this word ſeems not to be more clearly aſcertained among modern Philoſophers.

Mr HUME gives the name of *paſſion* to every principle of action in the human mind; and, in conſequence of this maintains, that every man is, and oughtto be led by his paſſions, and that the uſe of reaſon is to be ſubſervient to the paſſions.

Dr HUTCHESON, conſidering all the principles of action as ſo many determinations or motions of the will, divides them into the calm and the turbulent. The turbulent, he ſays, are our appetites and our paſſions. Of the paſſions, as well as of the calm determinations, he ſays, that "ſome are benevolent, others are ſelfiſh; that "anger, envy, indignation, and ſome others, may "be either ſelfiſh or benevolent, according as "they ariſe from ſome oppoſition to our own "intereſts, or to thoſe of our friends, or perſons "beloved or eſteemed."

It appears, therefore, that this excellent author gives the name of *paſſions*, not to every principle of action, but to ſome, and to thoſe only when they are turbulent and vehement, not when they are calm and deliberate.

Our

Our natural deſires and affections may be ſo calm as to leave room for reflection, ſo that we find no difficulty in deliberating cooly, whether, in ſuch a particular inſtance, they ought to be gratified or not. On other occaſions, they may be ſo importunate as to make deliberation very difficult, urging us, by a kind of violence, to their immediate gratification.

Thus, a man may be ſenſible of an injury without being inflamed. He judges coolly of the injury, and of the proper means of redreſs. This is reſentment without paſſion. It leaves to the man the entire command of himſelf.

On another occaſion, the ſame principle of reſentment riſes into a flame. His blood boils within him; his looks, his voice, and his geſture are changed; he can think of nothing but immediate revenge, and feels a ſtrong impulſe, without regard to conſequences, to ſay and do things which his cool reaſon cannot juſtify. This is the paſſion of reſentment.

What has been ſaid of reſentment may eaſily be applied to other natural deſires and affections. When they are ſo calm as neither to produce any ſenſible effects upon the body, nor to darken the underſtanding and weaken the power of ſelf-command, they are not called paſſions. But the ſame principle, when it becomes ſo violent as to produce theſe effects upon the body and upon the mind, is a paſſion, or, as CICERO very properly calls it, a perturbation.

It is evident, that this meaning of the word *paſſion* accords much better with its common uſe in language, than that which Mr HUME gives it.

When he ſays, that men ought to be governed by their paſſions only, and that the uſe of reaſon is to be ſubſervient to the paſſions, this, at firſt hearing, appears a ſhocking paradox, repugnant to good morals and to common ſenſe; but, like moſt other paradoxes, when explained according to his meaning, it is nothing but an abuſe of words.

For if we give the name of *paſſion* to every principle of action, in every degree, and give the name of *reaſon* ſolely to the power of diſcerning the fitneſs of means to ends, it will be true, that the uſe of reaſon is to be ſubſervient to the paſſions.

As I wiſh to uſe words as agreeably as poſſible to their common uſe in language, I ſhall, by the word *paſſion* mean, not any principle of action diſtinct from thoſe deſires and affections before explained, but ſuch a degree of vehemence in them, or in any of them, as is apt to produce thoſe effects upon the body or upon the mind which have been above deſcribed.

Our appetites, even when vehement, are not, I think, very commonly called paſſions, yet they are capable of being enflamed to rage, and in that caſe their effects are very ſimilar to thoſe of the paſſions; and what is ſaid of one may be applied to both.

Having

Having explained what I mean by paſſions, I think it unneceſſary to enter into any enumeration of them, ſince they differ, not in kind, but rather in degree, from the principles already enumerated.

The common diviſion of the paſſions into deſire and averſion, hope and fear, joy and grief, has been mentioned almoſt by every author who has treated of them, and needs no explication. But we may obſerve, that theſe are ingredients or modifications, not of the paſſions only, but of every principle of action, animal and rational.

All of them imply the deſire of ſome object; and the deſire of an object cannot be without averſion to its contrary; and, according as the object is preſent or abſent, deſire and averſion will be variouſly modified into joy or grief, hope or fear. It is evident, that deſire and averſion, joy and grief, hope and fear, may be either calm and ſedate, or vehement and paſſionate.

Paſſing theſe, therefore, as common to all principles of action, whether calm or vehement, I ſhall only make ſome obſervations on paſſion in general, which tend to ſhew its influence on human conduct.

Firſt, It is paſſion that makes us liable to ſtrong temptations. Indeed, if we had no paſſions, we ſhould hardly be under any temptation to wrong conduct. For, when we view things calmly, and free from any of the falſe colours which paſſion throws upon them, we can hardly

fail to ſee the right and the wrong, and to ſee that the firſt is more eligible than the laſt.

I believe a cool and deliberate preference of ill to good is never the firſt ſtep into vice.

"When the woman ſaw that the tree was "good for food, and that it was pleaſant to the "eyes, and a tree to be deſired to make one "wiſe, ſhe took of the fruit thereof and did eat, "and gave alſo to her huſband with her and he "did eat; and the eyes of them both were "opened." Inflamed deſire had blinded the eyes of their underſtanding.

Fix'd on the fruit ſhe gaz'd, which to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears the ſound
Yet rung of his perſuaſive words impregn'd
With reaſon to her ſeeming, and with truth.
—— Fair to the eye, inviting to the taſte,
Of virtue to make wiſe, what hinders then
To reach and feed at once both body and mind. MILT.

Thus our firſt parents were tempted to diſobey their Maker, and all their poſterity are liable to temptation from the ſame cauſe. Paſſion, or violent appetite, firſt blinds the underſtanding, and then perverts the will.

It is paſſion, therefore, and the vehement motions of appetite, that makes us liable, in our preſent ſtate, to ſtrong temptations to deviate from our duty. This is the lot of human nature in the preſent period of our exiſtence.

Human virtue muſt gather ſtrength by ſtruggle and effort. As infants, before they can walk without ſtumbling, muſt be expoſed to many a fall

fall and bruiſe; as wreſtlers acquire their ſtrength and agility by many a combat and violent exertion; ſo it is in the nobleſt powers of human nature, as well as the meaneſt, and even in virtue itſelf.

It is not only made manifeſt by temptation and trial, but by theſe means it acquires its ſtrength and vigour.

Men muſt acquire patience by ſuffering, and fortitude by being expoſed to danger, and every other virtue by ſituations that put it to trial and exerciſe.

This, for any thing we know, may be neceſſary in the nature of things. It is certainly a law of nature with regard to man.

Whether there may be orders of intelligent and moral creatures who never were ſubject to any temptation, nor had their virtue put to any trial, we cannot without preſumption determine. But it is evident, that this neither is, nor ever was the lot of man, not even in the ſtate of innocence.

Sad, indeed, would be the condition of man, if the temptations to which, by the conſtitution of his nature, and by his circumſtances, he is liable, were irreſiſtible. Such a ſtate would not at all be a ſtate of trial and diſcipline.

Our condition here is ſuch, that, on the one hand, paſſion often tempts and ſolicits us to do wrong; on the other hand, reaſon and conſcience oppoſe the dictates of paſſion. The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh. And upon the iſſue of this conflict, the character of the man and his fate depend.

If reaſon be victorious, his virtue is ſtrengthened; he has the inward ſatisfaction of having fought a good fight in behalf of his duty, and the peace of his mind is preſerved.

If, on the other hand, paſſion prevails againſt the ſenſe of duty, the man is conſcious of having done what he ought not, and might not have done. His own heart condemns him, and he is guilty to himſelf.

This conflict between the paſſions of our animal nature and the calm dictates of reaſon and conſcience, is not a theory invented to ſolve the phænomena of human conduct, it is a fact, of which every man who attends to his own conduct is conſcious.

In the moſt ancient philoſophy, of which we have any account, I mean that of the Pythagorean ſchool, the mind of man was compared to a ſtate or commonwealth, in which there are various powers, ſome that ought to govern, and others that ought to be ſubordinate.

The good of the whole, which is the ſupreme law in this, as in every commonwealth, requires that this ſubordination be preſerved, and that the governing powers have always the aſcendant over the appetites and the paſſions. All wiſe and good conduct conſiſts in this. All folly and vice in the prevalence of paſſion over the dictates of reaſon.

This philoſophy was adopted by PLATO; and it is ſo agreeable to what every man feels in himſelf,

ſelf, that it muſt always prevail with men who think without bias to a ſyſtem.

The governing powers, of which theſe ancient Philoſophers ſpeak, are the ſame which I call the *rational* principles of action, and which I ſhall have occaſion to explain. I only mention them here, becauſe, without a regard to them, the influence of the paſſions, and their rank in our conſtitution, cannot be diſtinctly underſtood.

A *ſecond* obſervation is, That the impulſe of paſſion is not always to what is bad, but very often to what is good, and what our reaſon approves. There are ſome paſſions, as Dr HUTCHESON obſerves, that are benevolent, as well as others that are ſelfiſh.

The affections of reſentment and emulation, with thoſe that ſpring from them, from their very nature, diſturb and diſquiet the mind, though they be not carried beyond the bounds which reaſon preſcribes; and therefore they are commonly called paſſions, even in their moderate degrees. From a ſimilar cauſe, the benevolent affections, which are placid in their nature, and are rarely carried beyond the bounds of reaſon are very ſeldom called paſſions. We do not give the name of paſſion to benevolence, gratitude or friendſhip. Yet we muſt except from this general rule, love between the ſexes, which, as it commonly diſcompoſes the mind, and is not eaſily kept within reaſonable bounds, is always called a paſſion.

All our natural deſires and affections are good and neceſſary parts of our conſtitution; and paſſion, being only a certain degree of vehemence in theſe, its natural tendency is to good, and it is by accident that it leads us wrong.

Paſſion is very properly ſaid to be blind. It looks not beyond the preſent gratification. It belongs to reaſon to attend to the accidental circumſtances which may ſometimes make that gratification improper or hurtful. When there is no impropriety in it, much more when it is our duty, paſſion aids reaſon, and gives additional force to its dictates.

Sympathy with the diſtreſſed may bring them a charitable relief, when a calm ſenſe of duty would be too weak to produce the effect.

Objects, either good or ill, conceived to be very diſtant, when they are conſidered cooly, have not that influence upon men which in reaſon they ought to have. Imagination, like the eye, diminiſheth its objects in proportion to their diſtance. The paſſions of hope and fear muſt be raiſed, in order to give ſuch objects their due magnitude in the imagination, and their due influence upon our conduct.

The dread of diſgrace and of the civil magiſtrate, and the apprehenſion of future puniſhment, prevent many crimes, which bad men, without theſe reſtraints, would commit, and contribute greatly to the peace and good order of ſociety.

There

There is no bad action which ſome paſſion may not prevent; nor is there any external good action, of which ſome paſſion may not be the main ſpring; and, it is very probable, that even the paſſions of men, upon the whole, do more good to ſociety than hurt.

The ill that is done draws our attention more, and is imputed ſolely to human paſſions. The good may have better motives, and charity leads us to think that it has; but, as we ſee not the heart, it is impoſſible to determine what ſhare men's paſſions may have in its production.

The *laſt* obſervation is, That if we diſtinguiſh, in the effects of our paſſions, thoſe which are altogether involuntary, and without the ſphere of our power, from the effects which may be prevented by an exertion, perhaps a great exertion, of ſelf-government; we ſhall find the firſt to be good and highly uſeful, and the laſt only to be bad.

Not to ſpeak of the effects of moderate paſſions upon the health of the body, to which ſome agitation of this kind ſeems to be no leſs uſeful than ſtorms and tempeſts to the ſalubrity of the air; every paſſion naturally draws our attention to its object, and intereſts us in it.

The mind of man is naturally deſultory, and when it has no intereſting object in view, roves from one to another, without fixing its attention upon any one. A tranſient and careleſs glance is all that we beſtow upon objects in which we take no concern. It requires a ſtrong degree of curioſity,

curioſity, or ſome more important paſſion, to give us that intereſt in an object which is neceſſary to our giving attention to it. And, without attention, we can form no true and ſtable judgment of any object.

Take away the paſſions, and it is not eaſy to ſay how great a part of mankind would reſemble thoſe frivolous mortals, who never had a thought that engaged them in good earneſt.

It is not mere judgment or intellectual ability that enables a man to excel in any art or ſcience. He muſt have a love and admiration of it bordering upon enthuſiaſm, or a paſſionate deſire of the fame, or of ſome other advantage to be got by that excellence. Without this, he would not undergo the labour and fatigue of his faculties, which it requires. So that, I think, we may with juſtice allow no ſmall merit to the paſſions, even in the diſcoveries and improvements of the arts and ſciences.

If the paſſions for fame and diſtinction were extinguiſhed, it would be difficult to find men ready to undertake the cares and toils of government; and few perhaps would make the exertions neceſſary to raiſe themſelves above the ignoble vulgar.

The involuntary ſigns of the paſſions and diſpoſitions of the mind, in the voice, features, and action, are a part of the human conſtitution which deſerves admiration. The ſignification of

thoſe

thoſe ſigns is known to all men by Nature, and previous to all experience.

They are ſo many openings into the ſouls of our fellow-men, by which their ſentiments become viſible to the eye. They are a natural language common to mankind, without which it would have been impoſſible to have invented any artificial language.

It is from the natural ſigns of the paſſions and diſpoſitions of the mind, that the human form derives its beauty; that painting, poetry, and muſic, derive their expreſſion; that eloquence derives its greateſt force, and converſation its greateſt charm.

The paſſions, when kept within their proper bounds, give life and vigour to the whole man. Without them man would be a ſlug. We ſee what poliſh and animation the paſſion of love, when honourable and not unſucceſsful, gives to both ſexes.

The paſſion for military glory raiſes the brave commander in the day of battle, far above himſelf, making his countenance to ſhine, and his eyes to ſparkle. The glory of old England warms the heart even of the Britiſh tar, and makes him deſpiſe every danger.

As to the bad effects of paſſion, it muſt be acknowledged that it often gives a ſtrong impulſe to what is bad, and what a man condemns himſelf for, as ſoon as it is done. But he muſt be conſcious that the impulſe, though ſtrong, was not

not irreſiſtible, otherwiſe he could not condemn himſelf.

We allow that a ſudden and violent paſſion, into which a man is ſurpriſed, alleviates a bad action; but if it was irreſiſtible, it would not only alleviate, but totally exculpate, which it never does, either in the judgment of the man himſelf, or of others.

To ſum up all, paſſion furniſhes a very ſtrong inſtance of the truth of the common maxim, That the corruption of the beſt things is worſt.

CHAP. VII.

Of Diſpoſition.

BY *diſpoſition* I mean a ſtate of mind which, while it laſts, gives a tendency, or proneneſs, to be moved by certain animal principles, rather than by others; while, at another time, another ſtate of mind, in the ſame perſon, may give the aſcendant to other animal principles.

It was before obſerved, that it is a property of our appetites to be periodical, ceaſing for a time, when ſated by their objects, and returning regularly after certain periods.

Even thoſe principles which are not periodical, have their ebbs and flows occaſionally, according to the preſent diſpoſition of the mind.

Among

Among ſome of the principles of action there is a natural affinity, ſo that one of the tribe naturally diſpoſes to thoſe which are allied to it.

Such an affinity has been obſerved by many good authors to be among all the benevolent affections. The exerciſe of one benevolent affection gives a proneneſs to the exerciſe of others.

There is a certain placid and agreeable tone of mind which is common to them all, which ſeems to be the bond of that connection and affinity they have with one another.

The malevolent affections have alſo an affinity, and mutually diſpoſe to each other, by means, perhaps, of that diſagreeable feeling common to them all, which makes the mind ſore and uneaſy.

As far as we can trace the cauſes of the different diſpoſitions of the mind, they ſeem to be in ſome caſes owing to thoſe aſſociating powers of the principles of action, which have a natural affinity, and are prone to keep company with one another; ſometimes to accidents of good or bad fortune, and ſometimes, no doubt, the ſtate of the body may have influence upon the diſpoſition of the mind.

At one time the ſtate of the mind, like a ſerene unclouded ſky, ſhews every thing in the moſt agreeable light. Then a man is prone to benevolence, compaſſion, and every kind affection; unſuſpicious, not eaſily provoked.

The Poets have obſerved that men have their *mollia tempora fandi*, when they are averſe from ſaying

ſaying or doing a harſh thing; and artful men watch theſe occaſions, and know how to improve them to promote their ends.

This diſpoſition, I think, we commonly call *good humour*, of which, in the fair ſex, Mr POPE ſays,

> Good humour only teaches charms to laſt,
> Still makes new conqueſts, and maintains the paſt.

There is no diſpoſition more comfortable to the perſon himſelf, or more agreeable to others, than good humour. It is to the mind, what good health is to the body, putting a man in the capacity of enjoying every thing that is agreeable in life, and of uſing every faculty without clog or impediment. It diſpoſes to contentment with our lot, to benevolence to all men, to ſympathy with the diſtreſſed. It preſents every object in the moſt favourable light, and diſpoſes us to avoid giving or taking offence.

This happy diſpoſition ſeems to be the natural fruit of a good conſcience, and a firm belief that the world is under a wiſe and benevolent adminiſtration; and, when it ſprings from this root, it is an habitual ſentiment of piety.

Good humour is likewiſe apt to be produced by happy ſucceſs, or unexpected good fortune. Joy and hope are favourable to it; vexation and diſapointment are unfavourable.

The only danger of this diſpoſition ſeems to be, That if we are not upon our guard, it may degenerate

degenerate into levity, and indiſpoſe us to a proper degree of caution, and of attention to the future conſequences of our actions.

There is a diſpoſition oppoſite to good humour which we call *bad humour*, of which the tendency is directly contrary, and therefore its influence is as malignant, as that of the other is ſalutary.

Bad humour alone is ſufficient to make a man unhappy; it tinges every object with its own diſmal colour; and, like a part that is galled, is hurt by every thing that touches it. It takes offence where none was meant, and diſpoſes to diſcontent, jealouſy, envy, and, in general, to malevolence.

Another couple of oppoſite diſpoſitions are *elation* of mind, on the one hand, and *depreſſion*, on the other.

Theſe contrary diſpoſitions are both of an ambiguous nature; their influence may be good or bad, according as they are grounded on true or falſe opinion, and according as they are regulated.

That elation of mind which ariſes from a juſt ſenſe of the dignity of our nature, and of the powers and faculties with which GOD hath endowed us, is true magnanimity, and diſpoſes a man to the nobleſt virtues, and the moſt heroic actions and enterpriſes.

There is alſo an elation of mind, which ariſes from a conſciouſneſs of our worth and integrity, ſuch as JOB felt, when he ſaid, "Till I die, I "will not remove my integrity from me. My "righteouſneſs

" righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it " go; my heart ſhall not reproach me while I " live." This may be called the pride of virtue; but it is a noble pride. It makes a man diſdain to do what is baſe or mean. This is the true ſenſe of honour.

But there is an elation of mind ariſing from a vain opinion of our having talents, or worth, which we have not; or from putting an undue value upon any of our endowments of mind, body, or fortune. This is pride, the parent of many odious vices; ſuch as arrogance, undue contempt of others, ſelf-partiality, and vicious ſelf-love.

The oppoſite diſpoſition to elation of mind, is depreſſion, which alſo has good or bad effects, according as it is grounded upon true or falſe opinion.

A juſt ſenſe of the weakneſs and imperfections of human nature, and of our own perſonal faults and defects, is true humility. It is *not to think of ourſelves above what we ought to think*; a moſt ſalutary and amiable diſpoſition; of great price in the ſight of GOD and man. Nor is it inconſiſtent with real magnanimity and greatneſs of ſoul. They may dwell together with great advantage and ornament to both, and be faithful monitors againſt the extremes to which each has the greateſt tendency.

But there is a depreſſion of mind which is the oppoſite to magnanimity, which debilitates the ſprings

ſprings of action, and freezes every ſentiment that ſhould lead to any noble exertion or enterpriſe.

Suppoſe a man to have no belief of a good adminiſtration of the world, no conception of the dignity of virtue, no hope of happineſs in another ſtate. Suppoſe him, at the ſame time, in a ſtate of extreme poverty and dependence, and that he has no higher aim than to ſupply his bodily wants, or to miniſter to the pleaſure, or flatter the pride, of ſome being as worthleſs as himſelf. Is not the ſoul of ſuch a man depreſſed as much as his body or his fortune? And, if fortune ſhould ſmile upon him while he retains the ſame ſentiments, he is only the ſlave of fortune. His mind is depreſſed to the ſtate of a brute; and his human faculties ſerve only to make him feel that depreſſion.

Depreſſion of mind may be owing to melancholy, a diſtemper of mind which proceeds from the ſtate of the body, which throws a diſmal gloom upon every object of thought, cuts all the ſinews of action, and often gives riſe to ſtrange and abſurd opinions in religion, or in other intereſting matters. Yet, where there is real worth at bottom, ſome rays of it will break forth even in this depreſſed ſtate of mind.

A remarkable inſtance of this was exhibited in Mr SIMON BROWN, a diſſenting clergyman in England, who, by melancholy, was led into the belief that his rational ſoul had gradually decayed within him, and at laſt was totally extinct.

From this belief he gave up his miniſterial function, and would not even join with others in any act of worſhip, conceiving it to be a profanation to worſhip GOD without a ſoul.

In this diſmal ſtate of mind, he wrote an excellent defence of the Chriſtian religion, againſt TINDAL's *Chriſtianity as old as the Creation.* To the book he prefixed an epiſtle dedicatory to Queen CAROLINE, wherein he mentions, "That "he was once a man, but, by the immediate "hand of GOD, for his ſins, his very thinking "ſubſtance has, for more than ſeven years, been "continually waſting away, till it is wholly pe-"riſhed out of him, if it be not utterly come to "nothing." And, having heard of her Majeſty's eminent piety, he begs the aid of her prayers.

The book was publiſhed after his death without the dedication, which, however, having been preſerved in manuſcript, was afterwards printed in the Adventurer, No. 88.

Thus this good man, when he believed that he had no ſoul, ſhewed a moſt generous and diſintereſted concern for thoſe who had ſouls.

As depreſſion of mind may produce ſtrange opinions, eſpecially in the caſe of melancholy, ſo our opinions may have a very conſiderable influence, either to elevate or to depreſs the mind, even where there is no melancholy.

Suppoſe, on one hand, a man who believes that he is deſtined to an eternal exiſtence; that he who made, and who governs the world, ma-

keth

keth account of him, and hath furniſhed him with the means of attaining a high degree of perfection and glory. With this man compare, on the other hand, the man who believes nothing at all, or who believes that his exiſtence is only the play of atoms, and that, after he hath been toſſed about by blind fortune for a few years, he ſhall again return to nothing. Can it be doubted, that the former opinion leads to elevation and greatneſs of mind, the latter to meanneſs and depreſſion?

CHAP. VIII.

Of Opinion.

WHEN we come to explain the rational principles of action, it will appear, that opinion is an eſſential ingredient in them. Here we are only to conſider its influence upon the animal principles. Some of thoſe I have ranked in that claſs cannot, I think, exiſt in the human mind without it.

Gratitude ſuppoſes the opinion of a favour done or intended; reſentment the opinion of an injury; eſteem the opinion of merit; the paſſion of love ſuppoſes the opinion of uncommon merit and perfection in its object.

Although natural affection to parents, children, and near relations, is not grounded on the opi-

nion of their merit, it is much increaſed by that conſideration. So is every benevolent affection. On the contrary, real malevolence can hardly exiſt without the opinion of demerit in the object.

There is no natural deſire or averſion, which may not be reſtrained by opinion. Thus, if a man were athirſt, and had a ſtrong deſire to drink, the opinion that there was poiſon in the cup would make him forbear.

It is evident, that hope and fear, which every natural deſire or affection may create, depend upon the opinion of future good or ill.

Thus it appears, that our paſſions, our diſpoſitions, and our opinions, have great influence upon our animal principles, to ſtrengthen or weaken, to excite or reſtrain them; and, by that means, have great influence upon human actions and characters.

That brute-animals have both paſſions and diſpoſitions ſimilar, in many reſpects, to thoſe of men, cannot be doubted. Whether they have opinions, is not ſo clear. I think they have not, in the proper ſenſe of the word. But, waving all diſpute upon this point, it will be granted, that opinion in men has a much wider field than in brutes. No man will ſay, that they have ſyſtems of theology, morals, juriſprudence or politics; or that they can reaſon from the laws of nature, in mechanics, medicine, or agriculture.

They

They feel the evils or enjoyments that are preſent; probably they imagine thoſe which experience has aſſociated with what they feel. But they can take no large proſpect either of the paſt or of the future, nor ſee through a train of conſequences.

A dog may be deterred from eating what is before him, by the fear of immediate puniſhment, which he has felt on like occaſions; but he is never deterred by the conſideration of health, or of any diſtant good.

I have been credibly informed, that a monkey, having once been intoxicated with ſtrong drink, in conſequence of which it burnt its foot in the fire, and had a ſevere fit of ſickneſs, could never after be induced to drink any thing but pure water. I believe this is the utmoſt pitch which the faculties of brutes can reach.

From the influence of opinion upon the conduct of mankind we may learn, that it is one of the chief inſtruments to be uſed in the diſcipline and government of men.

All men, in the early part of life, muſt be under the diſcipline and government of parents and tutors. Men, who live in ſociety, muſt be under the government of laws and magiſtrates, through life. The government of men is undoubtedly one of the nobleſt exertions of human power. And it is of great importance, that thoſe who have any ſhare, either in domeſtic or

civil government, ſhould know the nature of man, and how he is to be trained and governed.

Of all inſtruments of government, opinion is the ſweeteſt, and the moſt agreeable to the nature of man. Obedience that flows from opinion, is real freedom, which every man deſires. That which is extorted by fear of puniſhment, is ſlavery; a yoke which is always galling, and which every man will ſhake off when it is in his power.

The opinions of the bulk of mankind have always been, and will always be, what they are taught by thoſe whom they eſteem to be wiſe and good; and, therefore, in a conſiderable degree, are in the power of thoſe who govern them.

Man, uncorrupted by bad habits and bad opinions, is of all animals the moſt tractable; corrupted by theſe, he is of all animals the moſt untractable.

I apprehend, therefore, that, if ever civil government ſhall be brought to perfection, it muſt be the principal care of the ſtate to make good citizens by proper education, and proper inſtruction and diſcipline.

The moſt uſeful part of medicine is that which ſtrengthens the conſtitution, and prevents diſeaſes by good regimen; the reſt is ſomewhat like propping a ruinous fabric at great expence, and to little purpoſe. The art of government is the medicine of the mind, and the moſt uſeful part of it is that which prevents crimes and bad habits,

bits, and trains men to virtue and good habits, by proper education and diſcipline.

The end of government is to make the ſociety happy, which can only be done by making it good and virtuous.

That men in general will be good or bad members of ſociety, according to the education and diſcipline by which they have been trained, experience may convince us.

The preſent age has made great advances in the art of training men to military duty. It will not be ſaid, that thoſe who enter into that ſervice are more tractable than their fellow-ſubjects of other profeſſions. And I know not why it ſhould be thought impoſſible to train men to equal perfection in the other duties of good citizens.

What an immenſe difference is there, for the purpoſe of war, between an army properly trained, and a militia haſtily drawn out of the multitude? What ſhould hinder us from thinking, that, for every purpoſe of civil government, there may be a like difference between a civil ſociety properly trained to virtue, good habits and right ſentiments, and thoſe civil ſocieties which we now behold?—But I fear I ſhall be thought to digreſs from my ſubject into Utopian ſpeculation.

To make an end of what I have to ſay upon the animal principles of action, we may take a complex view of their effect in life, by ſuppoſing a being actuated by principles of no higher or-

der, to have no conſcience or ſenſe of duty, only let us allow him that ſuperiority of underſtanding, and that power of ſelf-government which man actually has. Let us ſpeculate a little upon this imaginary being, and conſider what conduct and tenor of action might be expected from him.

It is evident he would be a very different animal from a brute, and perhaps not very different, in appearance, from what a great part of mankind is.

He would be capable of conſidering the diſtant conſequences of his actions, and of reſtraining or indulging his appetites, deſires and affections, from the conſideration of diſtant good or evil.

He would be capable of chooſing ſome main end of his life, and planning ſuch a rule of conduct as appeared moſt ſubſervient to it. Of this we have reaſon to think no brute is capable.

We can perhaps conceive ſuch a balance of the animal principles of action, as, with very little ſelf-government, might make a man to be a good member of ſociety, a good companion, and to have many amiable qualities.

The balance of our animal principles, I think, conſtitutes what we call a man's *natural temper*; which may be good or bad, with regard to his virtue.

A man in whom the benevolent affections, the deſire of eſteem and good humour, are naturally prevalent, who is of a calm and diſpaſſionate nature, who has the good fortune to live with

with good men, and aſſociate with good companions, may behave properly with little effort.

His natural temper leads him, in moſt caſes, to do what virtue requires. And if he happens not to be expoſed to thoſe trying ſituations, in which virtue croſſes the natural bent of his temper, he has no great temptation to act amiſs.

But perhaps a happy natural temper, joined with ſuch a happy ſituation, is more ideal than real, though no doubt ſome men make nearer approaches to it than others.

The temper and the ſituation of men is commonly ſuch, that the animal principles alone, without ſelf-government, would never produce any regular and conſiſtent train of conduct.

One principle croſſes another. Without ſelf-government, that which is ſtrongeſt at the time will prevail. And that which is weakeſt at one time may, from paſſion, from a change of diſpoſition or of fortune, become ſtrongeſt at another time.

Every natural appetite, deſire, and affection, has its own preſent gratification only in view. A man, therefore, who has no other leader than theſe, would be like a ſhip in the ocean without hands, which cannot be ſaid to be deſtined to any port. He would have no character at all, but be benevolent or ſpiteful, pleaſant or moroſe, honeſt or diſhoneſt, as the preſent wind of paſſion or tide of humour moved him.

Every

Every man who purſues an end, be it good or bad, muſt be active when he is diſpoſed to be indolent; he muſt rein every paſſion and appetite that would lead him out of his road.

Mortification and ſelf-denial are found not in the paths of virtue only; they are common to every road that leads to an end, be it ambition, or avarice, or even pleaſure itſelf. Every man who maintains an uniform and conſiſtent character, muſt ſweat and toil, and often ſtruggle with his preſent inclination.

Yet thoſe who ſteadily purſue ſome end in life, though they muſt often reſtrain their ſtrongeſt deſires, and practiſe much ſelf-denial, have, upon the whole, more enjoyment than thoſe who have no end at all, but to gratify the preſent prevailing inclination.

A dog that is made for the chace, cannot enjoy the happineſs of a dog without that exerciſe. Keep him within doors, feed him with the moſt delicious fare, gave him all the pleaſures his nature is capable of, he ſoon becomes a dull, torpid, unhappy animal. No enjoyment can ſupply the want of that employment which nature has made his chief good. Let him hunt, and neither pain nor hunger nor fatigue ſeem to be evils. Deprived of this exerciſe, he can reliſh nothing. Life itſelf becomes burdenſome.

It is no diſparagement to the human kind to ſay, that man, as well as the dog, is made for hunting, and cannot be happy but in ſome vigorous

gorous purſuit. He has indeed nobler game to purſue than the dog, but he muſt have ſome purſuit, otherwiſe life ſtagnates, all the faculties are benumbed, the ſpirits flag, and his exiſtence becomes an unſurmountable burden.

Even the mere foxhunter, who has no higher purſuit than his dogs, has more enjoyment than he who has no purſuit at all. He has an end in view, and this invigorates his ſpirits, makes him deſpiſe pleaſure, and bear cold, hunger and fatigue, as if they were no evils.

Manet ſub Jove frigido
Venator, teneræ conjugis immemor;
Seu viſa eſt catulis cerva fidelibus
Seu rupit teretes Marſus aper plagas.

ESSAY III. PART III.

Of the Rational Principles of Action.

CHAP. I.

There are Rational Principles of Action in Man.

MECHANICAL principles of action produce their effect without any will or intention on our part. We may, by a voluntary effort, hinder the effect; but if it be not hindered by will and effort, it is produced without them.

Animal

Animal principles of action require intention and will in their operation, but not judgment. They are, by ancient moraliſts, very properly called *cæcæ cupidines*, blind deſires.

Having treated of theſe two claſſes, I proceed to the third, the *rational* principles of action in man; which have that name, becauſe they can have no exiſtence in beings not endowed with reaſon, and, in all their exertions, require, not only intention and will, but judgment or reaſon.

That talent which we call *reaſon*, by which men that are adult and of a ſound mind, are diſtinguiſhed from brutes, idiots, and infants, has, in all ages, among the learned and unlearned, been conceived to have two offices, to regulate our belief, and to regulate our actions and conduct.

Whatever we believe, we think agreeable to reaſon, and, on that account, yield our aſſent to it. Whatever we diſbelieve, we think contrary to reaſon, and, on that account, diſſent from it. Reaſon therefore is allowed to be the principle by which our belief and opinions ought to be regulated.

But reaſon has been no leſs univerſally conceived to be a principle, by which our actions ought to be regulated.

To act reaſonably, is a phraſe no leſs common in all languages, than to judge reaſonably. We immediately approve of a man's conduct, when it appears that he had good reaſon for what he did.

did. And every action we diſapprove, we think unreaſonable, or contrary to reaſon.

A way of ſpeaking ſo univerſal among men, common to the learned and the unlearned in all nations, and in all languages, muſt have a meaning. To ſuppoſe it to be words without meaning, is to treat, with undue contempt, the common ſenſe of mankind.

Suppoſing this phraſe to have a meaning, we may conſider in what way reaſon may ſerve to regulate human conduct, ſo that ſome actions of men are to be denominated reaſonable, and others unreaſonable.

I take it for granted, that there can be no exerciſe of reaſon without judgment, nor, on the other hand, any judgment of things abſtract and general, without ſome degree of reaſon.

If, therefore, there be any principles of action in the human conſtitution, which, in their nature, neceſſarily imply ſuch judgment, they are the principles which we may call rational, to diſtinguiſh them from animal principles, which imply deſire and will, but not judgment.

Every deliberate human action muſt be done either as the means, or as an end; as the means to ſome end, to which it is ſubſervient, or as an end, for its own ſake, and without regard to any thing beyond it.

That it is a part of the office of reaſon to determine, what are the proper means to any end which we deſire, no man ever denied. But ſome

Philoſophers,

Philoſophers, particularly Mr HUME, think that it is no part of the office of reaſon to determine the ends we ought to purſue, or the preference due to one end above another. This, he thinks, is not the office of reaſon, but of taſte or feeling.

If this be ſo, reaſon cannot, with any propriety, be called a principle of action. Its office can only be to miniſter to the principles of action, by diſcovering the means of their gratification. Accordingly Mr HUME maintains, that reaſon is no principle of action; but that it is, and ought to be, the ſervant of the paſſions.

I ſhall endeavour to ſhew, that, among the various ends of human actions, there are ſome, of which, without reaſon, we could not even form a conception; and that, as ſoon as they are conceived, a regard to them is, by our conſtitution, not only a principle of action, but a leading and governing principle, to which all our animal principles are ſubordinate, and to which they ought to be ſubject.

Theſe I ſhall call *rational* principles; becauſe they can exiſt only in beings endowed with reaſon, and becauſe, to act from theſe principles, is what has always been meant by acting according to reaſon.

The ends of human actions I have in view, are two, to wit, What is good for us upon the whole, and what appears to be our duty. They are very ſtrictly connected, lead to the ſame courſe of conduct, and co-operate with each other;

other; and, on that account, have commonly been comprehended under one name, that of *reaſon*. But as they may be disjoined, and are really diſtinct principles of action, I ſhall conſider them ſeparately.

CHAP. II.

Of Regard to our Good on the Whole.

IT will not be denied that man, when he comes to years of underſtanding, is led by his rational nature, to form the conception of what is good for him upon the whole.

How early in life this general notion of good enters into the mind, I cannot pretend to determine. It is one of the moſt general and abſtract notions we form.

Whatever makes a man more happy, or more perfect, is good, and is an object of deſire as ſoon as we are capable of forming the conception of it. The contrary is ill, and is an object of averſion.

In the firſt part of life we have many enjoyments of various kinds; but very ſimilar to thoſe of brute-animals.

They conſiſt in the exerciſe of our ſenſes and powers of motion, the gratification of our appe-

tites,

tites, and the exertions of our kind affections. Theſe are chequered with many evils of pain, and fear, and diſappointment, and ſympathy with the ſuffering of others.

But the goods and evils of this period of life, are of ſhort duration, and ſoon forgot. The mind being regardleſs of the paſt, and unconcerned about the future, we have then no other meaſure of good but the preſent deſire; no other meaſure of evil but the preſent averſion.

Every animal deſire has ſome particular and preſent object, and looks not beyond that object to its conſequences, or to the connections it may have with other things.

The preſent object, which is moſt attractive, or excites the ſtrongeſt deſire, determines the choice, whatever be its conſequences. The preſent evil that preſſes moſt, is avoided, though it ſhould be the road to a greater good to come, or the only way to eſcape a greater evil. This is the way in which brutes act, and the way in which men muſt act, till they come to the uſe of reaſon.

As we grow up to underſtanding, we extend our view both forward and backward. We reflect upon what is paſt, and, by the lamp of experience, diſcern what will probably happen in time to come. We find that many things which we eagerly deſired, were too dearly purchaſed, and that things grievous for the preſent, like nauſeous medicines, may be ſalutary in the iſſue.

We

We learn to obſerve the connections of things, and the conſequences of our actions; and, taking an extended view of our exiſtence, paſt, preſent, and future, we correct our firſt notions of good and ill, and form the conception of what is good or ill upon the whole; which muſt be eſtimated, not from the preſent feeling, or from the preſent animal deſire or averſion, but from a due conſideration of its conſequences, certain or probable, during the whole of our exiſtence.

That which, taken with all its diſcoverable connections and conſequences, brings more good than ill, I call *good upon the whole.*

That brute-animals have any conception of this good, I ſee no reaſon to believe. And it is evident, that man cannot have the conception of it, till reaſon be ſo far advanced, that he can ſeriouſly reflect upon the paſt, and take a proſpect of the future part of his exiſtence.

It appears therefore, that the very conception of what is good or ill for us upon the whole, is the offspring of reaſon, and can be only in beings endowed with reaſon. And if this conception give riſe to any principle of action in man, which he had not before, that principle may very properly be called a rational principle of action.

I pretend not in this to ſay any thing that is new, but what reaſon ſuggeſted to thoſe who firſt turned their attention to the philoſophy of morals. I beg leave to quote one paſſage from

CICERO, in his firſt book of *Offices;* wherein, with his uſual elegance, he expreſſes the ſubſtance of what I have ſaid. And there is good reaſon to think that CICERO borrowed it from PANÆTIUS, a Greek Philoſopher, whoſe books of Offices are loſt.

" Sed inter hominem et belluam hoc maxime " intereſt, quod hæc tantum quantum ſenſu mo- " vetur, ad id ſolum quod adeſt, quodque præſens " eſt ſe accommodat, paululum admodum ſen- " tiens præteritum aut futurum: Homo autem " quoniam rationis eſt particeps, per quam con- " ſequentia cernit, cauſas rerum videt, earumque " prægreſſus et quaſi anteceſſiones non ignorat; " ſimilitudines comparat, et rebus præſentibus " adjungit atque annectit futuras; facile totius " vitæ curſum videt, ad eamque degendam pre- " parat res neceſſarias."

I obſerve, in the *next* place, That as ſoon as we have the conception of what is good or ill for us upon the whole, we are led, by our conſtitution, to ſeek the good and avoid the ill; and this becomes not only a principle of action, but a leading or governing principle, to which all our animal principles ought to be ſubordinate.

I am very apt to think, with Dr PRICE, that, in intelligent beings, the deſire of what is good, and averſion to what is ill, is neceſſarily connected with the intelligent nature; and that it is a contradiction to ſuppoſe ſuch a being to have the notion of good without the deſire of it, or the notion

notion of ill without averſion to it. Perhaps there may be other neceſſary connections between underſtanding and the beſt principles of action, which our faculties are too weak to diſcern. That they are neceſſarily connected in him who is perfect in underſtanding, we have good reaſon to believe.

To prefer a greater good, though diſtant, to a leſs that is preſent; to chooſe a preſent evil, in order to avoid a greater evil, or to obtain a greater good, is, in the judgment of all men, wiſe and reaſonable conduct; and, when a man acts the contrary part, all men will acknowledge, that he acts fooliſhly and unreaſonably. Nor will it be denied, that, in innumerable caſes in common life, our animal principles draw us one way, while a regard to what is good on the whole, draws us the contrary way. Thus the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe two are contrary. That in every conflict of this kind the rational principle ought to prevail, and the animal to be ſubordinate, is too evident to need, or to admit of proof.

Thus, I think, it appears, that to purſue what is good upon the whole, and to avoid what is ill upon the whole, is a rational principle of action, grounded upon our conſtitution as reaſonable creatures.

It appears that it is not without juſt cauſe, that this principle of action has in all ages been called *reaſon*, in oppoſition to our animal prin-

ciples, which in common language are called by the general name of the *paſſions*.

The firſt not only operates in a calm and cool manner, like reaſon, but implies real judgment in all its operations. The ſecond, to wit, the paſſions, are blind deſires, of ſome particular object, without any judgment or conſideration, whether it be good for us upon the whole, or ill.

It appears alſo, that the fundamental maxim of prudence and of all good morals, That the paſſions ought, in all caſes, to be under the dominion of reaſon, is not only ſelf-evident, when rightly underſtood, but is expreſſed according to the common uſe and propriety of language.

The contrary maxim maintained by Mr HUME, can only be defended by a groſs and palpable abuſe of words. For, in order to defend it, he muſt include under the *paſſions*, that very principle which has always, in all languages, been called *reaſon*, and never was, in any language, called a *paſſion*. And from the meaning of the word *reaſon* he muſt exclude the moſt important part of it, by which we are able to diſcern and to purſue what appears to be good upon the whole. And thus, including the moſt important part of reaſon under paſſion, and making the leaſt important part of reaſon to be the whole, he defends his favourite paradox, That reaſon is, and ought to be, the ſervant of the paſſions.

To

To judge of what is true or falſe in ſpeculative points, is the office of ſpeculative reaſon; and to judge of what is good or ill for us upon the whole, is the office of practical reaſon. Of true and falſe there are no degrees; but of good and ill there are many degrees, and many kinds; and men are very apt to form erroneous opinions concerning them; miſled by their paſſions, by the authority of the multitude, and by other cauſes.

Wiſe men, in all ages, have reckoned it a chief point of wiſdom, to make a right eſtimate of the goods and evils of life. They have laboured to diſcover the errors of the multitude on this important point, and to warn others againſt them.

The ancient moraliſts, though divided into ſects, all agreed in this, That opinion has a mighty influence upon what we commonly account the goods and ills of life, to alleviate or to aggravate them.

The Stoics carried this ſo far, as to conclude that they all depend on opinion. Πάντα Ὑπόληψις was a favourite maxim with them.

We ſee, indeed, that the ſame ſtation or condition of life, which makes one man happy, makes another miſerable, and to a third is perfectly indifferent. We ſee men miſerable through life, from vain fears, and anxious deſires, grounded ſolely upon wrong opinions. We ſee men wear themſelves out with toilſome days, and ſleepleſs nights, in purſuit of ſome object which

they never attain; or which, when attained, gives little ſatisfaction, perhaps real diſguſt.

The evils of life, which every man muſt feel, have a very different effect upon different men. What ſinks one into deſpair and abſolute miſery, rouſes the virtue and magnanimity of another, who bears it as the lot of humanity, and as the diſcipline of a wiſe and merciful Father in heaven. He riſes ſuperior to adverſity, and is made wiſer and better by it, and conſequently happier.

It is therefore of the laſt importance, in the conduct of life, to have juſt opinions with reſpect to good and evil; and ſurely it is the province of reaſon to correct wrong opinions, and to lead us into thoſe that are juſt and true.

It is true indeed, that men's paſſions and appetites, too often, draw them to act contrary to their cool judgment and opinion of what is beſt for them. *Video meliora proboque, deteriora, ſequor*, is the caſe in every wilful deviation from our true intereſt and our duty.

When this is the caſe, the man is ſelf-condemned, he ſees that he acted the part of a brute, when he ought to have acted the part of a man. He is convinced that reaſon ought to have reſtrained his paſſion, and not to have given the rein to it.

When he feels the bad effects of his conduct, he imputes them to himſelf, and would be ſtung with remorſe for his folly, though he had no account to make to a ſuperior Being. He has ſinned

ned againſt himſelf, and brought upon his own head the puniſhment which his folly deſerved.

From this we may ſee, that this rational principle of a regard to our good upon the whole, gives us the conception of a *right* and a *wrong* in human conduct, at leaſt of a *wiſe* and a *fooliſh*. It produces a kind of ſelf-approbation, when the paſſions and appetites are kept in their due ſubjection to it; and a kind of remorſe and compunction, when it yields to them.

In theſe reſpects, this principle is ſo ſimilar to the moral principle, or conſcience, and ſo interwoven with it, that both are commonly comprehended under the name of *reaſon*. This ſimilarity led many of the ancient Philoſophers, and ſome among the moderns, to reſolve conſcience, or a ſenſe of duty, entirely into a regard to what is good for us upon the whole.

That they are diſtinct principles of action, though both lead to the ſame conduct in life, I ſhall have occaſion to ſhew, when I come to treat of *conſcience*.

CHAP. III.

The Tendency of this Principle.

IT has been the opinion of the wiſeſt men, in all ages, that this principle, of a regard to our good upon the whole, in a man duly enlightened, leads to the practice of every virtue.

This was acknowledged, even by EPICURUS; and the beſt moraliſts among the ancients derived all the virtues from this principle. For, among them, the whole of morals was reduced to this queſtion, What is the greateſt good? Or what courſe of conduct is beſt for us upon the whole?

In order to reſolve this queſtion, they divided goods into three claſſes, the goods of the body; the goods of fortune, or external goods, and the goods of the mind; meaning, by the laſt, wiſdom and virtue.

Comparing theſe different claſſes of goods, they ſhewed, with convincing evidence, that the goods of the mind are, in many reſpects, ſuperior to thoſe of the body and of fortune, not only as they have more dignity, are more durable, and leſs expoſed to the ſtrokes of fortune, but chiefly as they are the only goods in our power, and which depend wholly on our conduct.

EPICURUS himſelf maintained, that the wiſe man may be happy in the tranquillity of his mind, even when racked with pain, and ſtruggling with adverſity.

They obſerved very juſtly, that the goods of fortune, and even thoſe of the body, depend much on opinion; and that, when our opinion of them is duly corrected by reaſon, we ſhall find them of ſmall value in themſelves.

How can he be happy who places his happineſs in things which it is not in his power to attain, or in things from which, when attained, a

fit

fit of ſickneſs, or a ſtroke of fortune, may tear him aſunder.

The value we put upon things, and our uneaſineſs in the want of them, depend upon the ſtrength of our deſires; correct the deſire, and the uneaſineſs ceaſes.

The fear of the evils of body and of fortune, is often a greater evil than the things we fear. As the wiſe man moderates his deſires by temperance, ſo, to real or imaginary dangers, he oppoſes the ſhield of fortitude and magnanimity, which raiſes him above himſelf, and makes him happy and triumphant in thoſe moments wherein others are moſt miſerable.

Theſe oracles of reaſon led the Stoics ſo far as to maintain, That all deſires and fears, with regard to things not in our power, ought to be totally eradicated; that virtue is the only good; that what we call the goods of the body and of fortune, are really things indifferent, which may, according to circumſtances, prove good or ill, and therefore have no intrinſic goodneſs in themſelves; that our ſole buſineſs ought to be, to act our part well, and to do what is right, without the leaſt concern about things not in our power, which we ought, with perfect acquieſcence, to leave to the care of him who governs the world.

This noble and elevated conception of human wiſdom and duty was taught by SOCRATES, free from the extravagancies which the Stoics afterwards joined with it. We ſee it in the Alcibi-

ades

ades of PLATO; from which JUVENAL hath taken it in his tenth ſatire, and adorned it with the graces of poetry.

Omnibus in terris quæ ſunt a gadibus uſque
Auroram et Gangen, pauci digniſcere poſſunt
Vera bona, atque illis multum diverſa, remotâ
Erroris nebulâ. Quid enim ratione timemus?
Aut cupimus? Quid tam dextrâ pede concupis ut te
Conatus non pœniteat, votique peracti?
Nil ergo optabunt homines? Si conſilium vis,
Permittes ipſis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebuſque ſit utile noſtris.
Nam pro jucundis aptiſſima quæque dabunt Dii.
Charior eſt illis homo quam ſibi. Nos animorum
Impulſu, et cæca magnaque cupidine ducti,
Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris; at illis
Notum qui pueri, qualiſque futura ſit uxor.
Fortem poſce animum, et mortis terrore carentem,
Qui ſpatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat
Naturæ; qui ferre queat quoſcunque labores,
Neſciat iraſci, cupiat nihil, et potiores
HERCULIS ærumnas credat, ſævòſque labores
Et venere, et cœnis, et plumis, SARDANAPALI.
Monſtro quid ipſe tibi poſſis dare. Semita certe
Tranquillæ per virtutem patet unica vitæ.
Nullum numen abeſt ſi ſit prudentia; ſed te
Nos facimus fortuna Deam, cœloque locamus.

Even HORACE, in his ſerious moments, falls into this ſyſtem.

Nil admirari, prope res eſt una Numici,
Solaque quæ poſſit facere et ſervare beatum.

We cannot but admire the Stoical ſyſtem of morals, even when we think that, in ſome points,

it

it went beyond the pitch of human nature. The virtue, the temperance, the fortitude and magnanimity of ſome who ſincerely embraced it, amidſt all the flattery of ſovereign power and the luxury of a court, will be everlaſting monuments to the honour of that ſyſtem, and to the honour of human nature.

That a due regard to what is beſt for us upon the whole, in an enlightened mind, leads to the practice of every virtue, may be argued from conſidering what we think beſt for thoſe for whom we have the ſtrongeſt affection, and whoſe good we tender as our own. In judging for ourſelves, our paſſions and appetites are apt to bias our judgment; but when we judge for others, this bias is removed, and we judge impartially.

What is it then that a wiſe man would wiſh as the greateſt good to a brother, a ſon, or a friend?

Is it that he may ſpend his life in a conſtant round of the pleaſures of ſenſe, and fare ſumptuouſly every day?

No, ſurely; we wiſh him to be a man of real virtue and worth. We may wiſh for him an honourable ſtation in life; but only with this condition, that he acquit himſelf honourably in it, and acquire juſt reputation, by being uſeful to his country and to mankind. We would a thouſand times rather wiſh him honourably to undergo the labours of HERCULES, than to diſſolve in pleaſure with SARDANAPALUS.

Such

Such would be the wiſh of every man of underſtanding for the friend whom he loves as his own ſoul. Such things, therefore, he judges to be beſt for him upon the whole; and if he judges otherwiſe for himſelf, it is only becauſe his judgment is perverted by animal paſſions and deſires.

The ſum of what has been ſaid in theſe three chapters amounts to this:

There is a principle of action in men that are adult and of a ſound mind, which, in all ages, has been called *reaſon*, and ſet in oppoſition to the animal principles which we call the *paſſions*. The ultimate object of this principle is what we judge to be good upon the whole. This is not the object of any of our animal principles, they being all directed to particular objects, without any compariſon with others, or any conſideration of their being good or ill upon the whole.

What is good upon the whole cannot even be conceived without the exerciſe of reaſon, and therefore cannot be an object to beings that have not ſome degree of reaſon.

As ſoon as we have the conception of this object, we are led, by our conſtitution, to deſire and purſue it. It juſtly claims a preference to all objects of purſuit that can come in competition with it. In preferring it to any gratification that oppoſes it, or in ſubmitting to any pain or mortification which it requires, we act according to reaſon; and every ſuch action is accompanied with

with ſelf-approbation and the approbation of mankind. The contrary actions are accompanied with ſhame and ſelf-condemnation in the agent, and with contempt in the ſpectator, as fooliſh and unreaſonable.

The right application of this principle to our conduct requires an extenſive proſpect of human life, and a correct judgment and eſtimate of its goods and evils, with reſpect to their intrinſic worth and dignity, their conſtancy and duration, and their attainableneſs. He muſt be a wiſe man indeed, if any ſuch man there be, who can perceive, in every inſtance, or even in every important inſtance, what is beſt for him upon the whole, if he have no other rule to direct his conduct.

However, according to the beſt judgment which wiſe men have been able to form, this principle leads to the practice of every virtue: It leads directly to the virtues of prudence, temperance and fortitude. And, when we conſider ourſelves as ſocial creatures, whoſe happineſs or miſery is very much connected with that of our fellow-men; when we conſider, that there are many benevolent affections planted in our conſtitution, whoſe exertions make a capital part of our good and enjoyment; from theſe conſiderations, this principle leads us alſo, though more indirectly, to the practice of juſtice, humanity, and all the ſocial virtues.

It is true, that a regard to our own good cannot, of itſelf, produce any benevolent affection.

But,

But, if ſuch affections be a part of our conſtitution, and if the exerciſe of them make a capital part of our happineſs, a regard to our own good ought to lead us to cultivate and exerciſe them, as every benevolent affection makes the good of others to be our own.

CHAP. IV.

Defects of this Principle.

HAVING explained the nature of this principle of action, and ſhewn in general the tenor of conduct to which it leads, I ſhall conclude what relates to it, by pointing out ſome of its defects, if it be ſuppoſed, as it has been by ſome Philoſophers, to be the only regulating principle of human conduct.

Upon that ſuppoſition, it would neither be a ſufficiently plain rule of conduct, nor would it raiſe the human character to that degree of perfection of which it is capable, nor would it yield ſo much real happineſs as when it is joined with another rational principle of action, to wit, a diſintereſted regard to duty.

Firſt, I apprehend the greater part of mankind can never attain ſuch extenſive views of human life, and ſo correct a judgment of good and ill, as the right application of this principle requires.

The

The authority of the poet before quoted is of weight in this point. "Pauci dignoſcere poſſunt "vera bona, remotâ erroris nebulâ." The ignorance of the bulk of mankind concurs with the ſtrength of their paſſions to lead them into error in this moſt important point.

Every man, in his calm moments, wiſhes to know what is beſt for him on the whole, and to do it. But the difficulty of diſcovering it clearly, amid ſuch variety of opinions and the importunity of preſent deſires, tempt men to give over the ſearch, and to yield to the preſent inclination.

Though Philoſophers and moraliſts have taken much laudable pains to correct the errors of mankind in this great point, their inſtructions are known to few; they have little influence upon the greater part of thoſe to whom they are known, and ſometimes little even upon the Philoſopher himſelf.

Speculative diſcoveries gradually ſpread from the knowing to the ignorant, and diffuſe themſelves over all, ſo that, with regard to them, the world, it may be hoped, will ſtill be growing wiſer. But the errors of men, with regard to what is truly good or ill, after being diſcovered and refuted in every age, are ſtill prevalent.

Men ſtand in need of a ſharper monitor to their duty than a dubious view of diſtant good. There is reaſon to believe, that a preſent ſenſe of duty has, in many caſes, a ſtronger influence than the apprehenſion of diſtant good would have of itſelf.

itſelf. And it cannot be doubted, that a ſenſe of guilt and demerit is a more pungent reprover than the bare apprehenſion of having miſtaken our true intereſt.

The brave ſoldier, in expoſing himſelf to danger and death, is animated, not by a cold computation of the good and the ill, but by a noble and elevated ſenſe of military duty.

A Philoſopher ſhews, by a copious and juſt induction, what is our real good and what our ill. But this kind of reaſoning is not eaſily apprehended by the bulk of men. It has too little force upon their minds to reſiſt the ſophiſtry of the paſſions. They are apt to think, that if ſuch rules be good in the general, they may admit of particular exceptions, and that what is good for the greater part, may, to ſome perſons, on account of particular circumſtances, be ill.

Thus, I apprehend, that, if we had no plainer rule to direct our conduct in life than a regard to our greateſt good, the greateſt part of mankind would be fatally miſled, even by ignorance of the road to it.

Secondly, Though a ſteady purſuit of our own real good may, in an enlightened mind, produce a kind of virtue which is entitled to ſome degree of approbation, yet it can never produce the nobleſt kind of virtue, which claims our higheſt love and eſteem.

We account him a wiſe man who is wiſe for himſelf; and, if he proſecutes this end through difficulties

difficulties and temptations that lie in his way; his character is far ſuperior to that of the man who, having the ſame end in view, is continually ſtarting out of the road to it, from an attachment to his appetites and paſſions, and doing every day what he knows he ſhall heartily repent.

Yet, after all, this wiſe man, whoſe thoughts and cares are all centered ultimately in himſelf, who indulges even his ſocial affections only with a view to his own good, is not the man whom we cordially love and eſteem.

Like a cunning merchant, he carries his goods to the beſt market, and watches every opportunity of putting them off to the beſt account. He does well and wiſely. But it is for himſelf. We owe him nothing upon this account. Even when he does good to others, he means only to ſerve himſelf; and therefore has no juſt claim to their gratitude or affection.

This ſurely, if it be virtue, is not the nobleſt kind, but a low and mercenary ſpecies of it. It can neither give a noble elevation to the mind that poſſeſſes it, nor attract the eſteem and love of others.

Our cordial love and eſteem is due only to the man whoſe ſoul is not contracted within itſelf, but embraces a more extenſive object: who loves virtue, not for her dowry only, but for her own ſake: whoſe benevolence is not ſelfiſh, but generous and diſintereſted: who, forgetful of himſelf,

ſelf, has the common good at heart, not as the means only, but as the end: who abhors what is baſe, though he were to be a gainer by it, and loves that which is right, although he ſhould ſuffer by it.

Such a man we eſteem the perfect man, compared with whom, he who has no other aim but good to himſelf, is a mean and deſpicable character.

Diſintereſted goodneſs and rectitude is the glory of the Divine Nature, without which he might be an object of fear or hope, but not of true devotion. And it is the image of this divine attribute in the human character, that is the glory of man.

To ſerve GOD and be uſeful to mankind, without any concern about our own good and happineſs, is, I believe, beyond the pitch of human nature. But to ſerve GOD and be uſeful to men, merely to obtain good to ourſelves, or to avoid ill, is ſervility, and not that liberal ſervice which true devotion and real virtue require.

Thirdly, Though one might be apt to think, that he has the beſt chance for happineſs, who has no other end of his deliberate actions but his own good; yet a little conſideration may ſatisfy us of the contrary.

A concern for our own good is not a principle that, of itſelf, gives any enjoyment. On the contrary, it is apt to fill the mind with fear, and care, and anxiety. And theſe concomitants of this

this principle, often give pain and uneaſineſs, that overbalance the good they have in view.

We may here compare, in point of preſent happineſs, two imaginary characters; the firſt, of the man who has no other ultimate end of his deliberate actions but his own good; and who has no regard to virtue or duty, but as the means to that end. The ſecond character is that of the man who is not indifferent with regard to his own good, but has another ultimate end perfectly conſiſtent with it, to wit, a diſintereſted love of virtue, for its own ſake, or a regard to duty as an end.

Comparing theſe two characters in point of happineſs, that we may give all poſſible advantage to the ſelfiſh principle, we ſhall ſuppoſe the man who is actuated ſolely by it, to be ſo far enlightened as to ſee it his intereſt to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in the world, and that he follows the ſame courſe of conduct from the motive of his own good only, which the other does, in a great meaſure, or in ſome meaſure, from a ſenſe of duty and rectitude.

We put the caſe ſo as that the difference between theſe two perſons may be, not in what they do, but in the motive from which they do it: and, I think, there can be no doubt that he who acts from the nobleſt and moſt generous motive, will have moſt happineſs in his conduct.

The one labours only for hire, without any love to the work. The other loves the work,

and thinks it the nobleſt and moſt honourable he can be employed in. To the firſt, the mortification and ſelf-denial which the courſe of virtue requires, is a grievous taſk, which he ſubmits to only through neceſſity. To the other it is victory and triumph, in the moſt honourable warfare.

It ought further to be conſidered, That although wiſe men have concluded that virtue is the only road to happineſs, this concluſion is founded chiefly upon the natural reſpect men have for virtue, and the good or happineſs that is intrinſic to it and ariſes from the love of it. If we ſuppoſe a man, as we now do, altogether deſtitute of this principle, who conſidered virtue only as the means to another end, there is no reaſon to think that he would ever take it to be the road to happineſs, but would wander for ever ſeeking this object, where it is not to be found.

The road of duty is ſo plain, that the man who ſeeks it, with an upright heart, cannot greatly err from it. But the road to happineſs, if that be ſuppoſed the only end our nature leads us to purſue, would be found dark and intricate, full of ſnares and dangers, and therefore not to be trodden without fear, and care, and perplexity.

The happy man therefore, is not he whoſe happineſs is his only care, but he who, with perfect reſignation, leaves the care of his happineſs

to

to Him who made him, while he purſues with ardor the road of his duty.

This gives an elevation to his mind, which is real happineſs. Inſtead of care, and fear, and anxiety, and diſappointment, it brings joy and triumph. It gives a reliſh to every good we enjoy, and brings good out of evil.

And as no man can be indifferent about his happineſs, the good man has the conſolation to know, that he conſults his happineſs moſt effectually, when, without any painful anxiety about future events, he does his duty.

Thus, I think, it appears, That although a regard to our good upon the whole, be a rational principle in man, yet, if it be ſuppoſed the only regulating principle of our conduct, it would be a more uncertain rule, it would give far leſs perfection to the human character, and far leſs happineſs, than when joined with another rational principle, to wit, a regard to duty.

CHAP. V.

Of the Notion of Duty, Rectitude, moral Obligation.

A BEING endowed with the animal principles of action only, may be capable of being trained to certain purpoſes by diſcipline, as we ſee many brute-animals are, but would be altogether incapable of being governed by law.

The ſubject of law muſt have the conception of a general rule of conduct, which, without ſome degree of reaſon, he cannot have. He muſt likewiſe have a ſufficient inducement to obey the law, even when his ſtrongeſt animal deſires draw him the contrary way.

This inducement may be a ſenſe of intereſt, or a ſenſe of duty, or both concurring.

Theſe are the only principles I am able to conceive, which can reaſonably induce a man to regulate all his actions according to a certain general rule or law. They may therefore be juſtly called the *rational* principles of action, ſince they can have no place but in a being endowed with reaſon, and ſince it is by them only, that man is capable either of political or of moral government.

Without them human life would be like a ſhip at ſea without hands, left to be carried by winds and tides as they happen. It belongs to the rational part of our nature to intend a certain port, as the end of the voyage of life; to take the advantage of winds and tides when they are favourable, and to bear up againſt them when they are unfavourable.

A ſenſe of intereſt may induce us to do this, when a ſuitable reward is ſet before us. But there is a nobler principle in the conſtitution of man, which, in many caſes, gives a clearer and more certain rule of conduct, than a regard merely

merely to intereſt would give, and a principle, without which man would not be a moral agent.

A man is prudent when he conſults his real intereſt, but he cannot be virtuous, if he has no regard to duty.

I proceed now to conſider this regard to duty as a rational principle of action in man, and as that principle alone by which he is capable either of virtue or vice.

I ſhall firſt offer ſome obſervations with regard to the general notion of duty, and its contrary, or of right and wrong in human conduct, and then conſider how we come to judge and determine certain things in human conduct to be right, and others to be wrong.

With regard to the notion or conception of duty, I take it to be too ſimple to admit of a logical definition.

We can define it only by ſynonymous words or phraſes, or by its properties and neceſſary concomitants, as when we ſay that it is what we ought to do, what is fair and honeſt, what is approvable, what every man profeſſes to be the rule of his conduct, what all men praiſe, and what is in itſelf laudable, though no man ſhould praiſe it.

I obſerve, in the *next* place, That the notion of duty cannot be reſolved into that of intereſt, or what is moſt for our happineſs.

Every man may be ſatisfied of this who attends to his own conceptions, and the language

of all mankind ſhews it. When I ſay this is my intereſt, I mean one thing; when I ſay it is my duty, I mean another thing. And though the ſame courſe of action, when rightly underſtood, may be both my duty and my intereſt, the conceptions are very different. Both are reaſonable motives to action, but quite diſtinct in their nature.

I preſume it will be granted, that in every man of real worth, there is a principle of honour, a regard to what is honourable or diſhonourable, very diſtinct from a regard to his intereſt. It is folly in a man to diſregard his intereſt, but to do what is diſhonourable is baſeneſs. The firſt may move our pity, or, in ſome caſes, our contempt, but the laſt provokes our indignation.

As theſe two principles are different in their nature, and not reſolvable into one, ſo the principle of honour is evidently ſuperior in dignity to that of intereſt.

No man would allow him to be a man of honour, who ſhould plead his intereſt to juſtify what he acknowledged to be diſhonourable; but to ſacrifice intereſt to honour never coſts a bluſh.

It likewiſe will be allowed by every man of honour, that this principle is not to be reſolved into a regard to our reputation among men, otherwiſe the man of honour would not deſerve to be truſted in the dark. He would have no

averſion

averſion to lie, or cheat, or play the coward, when he had no dread of being diſcovered.

I take it for granted, therefore, that every man of real honour feels an abhorrence of certain actions, becauſe they are in themſelves baſe, and feels an obligation to certain other actions, becauſe they are in themſelves what honour requires, and this, independently of any conſideration of intereſt or reputation.

This is an immediate moral obligation. This principle of honour, which is acknowledged by all men who pretend to character, is only another name for what we call a regard to duty, to rectitude, to propriety of conduct. It is a moral obligation which obliges a man to do certain things becauſe they are right, and not to do other things becauſe they are wrong.

Aſk the man of honour, why he thinks himſelf obliged to pay a debt of honour? The very queſtion ſhocks him. To ſuppoſe that he needs any other inducement to do it but the principle of honour, is to ſuppoſe that he has no honour, no worth, and deſerves no eſteem.

There is therefore a principle in man, which, when he acts according to it, gives him a conſciouſneſs of worth, and when he acts contrary to it, a ſenſe of demerit.

From the varieties of education, of faſhion, of prejudices, and of habits, men may differ much in opinion with regard to the extent of this principle, and of what it commands and forbids;

forbids; but the notion of it, as far as it is carried, is the ſame in all. It is that which gives a man real worth, and is the object of moral approbation.

Men of rank call it *honour*, and too often confine it to certain virtues that are thought moſt eſſential to their rank. The vulgar call it *honeſty*, *probity*, *virtue*, *conſcience*. Philoſophers have given it the names of *the moral ſenſe*, *the moral faculty*, *rectitude*.

The univerſality of this principle in men that are grown up to years of underſtanding and reflection, is evident. The words that expreſs it, the names of the virtues which it commands, and of the vices which it forbids, the *ought* and *ought not* which expreſs its dictates, make an eſſential part of every language. The natural affections of reſpect to worthy characters, of reſentment of injuries, of gratitude for favours, of indignation againſt the worthleſs, are parts of the human conſtitution which ſuppoſe a right and a wrong in conduct. Many tranſactions that are found neceſſary in the rudeſt ſocieties go upon the ſame ſuppoſition. In all teſtimony, in all promiſes, and in all contracts, there is neceſſarily implied a moral obligation on one party, and a truſt in the other, grounded upon this obligation.

The variety of opinions among men in points of morality, is not greater, but, as I apprehend, much leſs than in ſpeculative points; and this variety is as eaſily accounted for from the common

mon cauſes of error, in the one caſe as in the other; ſo that it is not more evident, that there is a real diſtinction between true and falſe, in matters of ſpeculation, than that there is a real diſtinction between right and wrong in human conduct.

Mr HUME's authority, if there were any need of it, is of weight in this matter, becauſe he was not wont to go raſhly into vulgar opinions.

"Thoſe, ſays he, who have denied the reality "of moral diſtinctions, may be ranked among "the diſingenuous diſputants (who really do not "believe the opinions they defend, but engage "in the controverſy, from affectation, from a "ſpirit of oppoſition, or from a deſire of ſhew- "ing wit and ingenuity ſuperior to the reſt of "mankind); nor is it conceivable, that any hu- "man creature could ever ſeriouſly believe, that "all characters and actions were alike entitled "to the regard and affection of every one.

"Let a man's inſenſibility be ever ſo great, "he muſt often be touched with the images of "right and wrong; and let his prejudices be "ever ſo obſtinate, he muſt obſerve that others "are ſuſceptible of like impreſſions. The only "way, therefore, of convincing an antagoniſt of "this kind is to leave him to himſelf. For, find- "ing that nobody keeps up the controverſy with "him, it is probable he will at laſt, of himſelf, "from mere wearineſs, come over to the ſide of "common ſenſe and reaſon."

What

What we call *right* and *bonourable* in human conduct, was, by the ancients, called *honeſtum*, τὸ καλὸν; of which TULLY ſays, "Quod vere di-" cimus, etiamſi a nullo laudetur, natura eſſe lau-" dabile."

All the ancient ſects, except the Epicureans, diſtinguiſhed the *honeſtum* from the *utile*, as we diſtinguiſh what is a man's duty from what is his intereſt.

The word *officium*, καθῆκον, extended both to the *honeſtum* and the *utile*: So that every reaſonable action, proceeding either from a ſenſe of duty or a ſenſe of intereſt, was called *officium*. It is defined by CICERO to be, "Id quod cur factum ſit " ratio probabilis reddi poteſt." We commonly render it by the word *duty*, but it is more extenſive; for the word *duty*, in the Engliſh language, I think, is commonly applied only to what the ancients called *honeſtum*. CICERO, and PANÆTIUS before him, treating of offices, firſt point out thoſe that are grounded upon the *honeſtum*, and next thoſe that are grounded upon the *utile*.

The moſt ancient philoſophical ſyſtem concerning the principles of action in the human mind, and, I think, the moſt agreeable to Nature, is that which we find in ſome fragments of the ancient Pythagoreans, and which is adopted by PLATO, and explained in ſome of his dialogues.

According to this ſyſtem, there is a leading principle in the ſoul, which, like the ſupreme power in a commonwealth, has authority and right

right to govern. This leading principle they called *reaſon*. It is that which diſtinguiſhes men that are adult from brutes, idiots and infants. The inferior principles, which are under the authority of the leading principle, are our paſſions and appetites, which we have in common with the brutes.

CICERO adopts this ſyſtem, and expreſſes it well in few words. "Duplex enim eſt vis animorum atque naturæ. Una pars in appetitu poſita eſt, quæ hominem huc et illuc rapit, quæ eſt ὁρμὴ græce, altera in ratione, quæ docet, et explanat quid faciendum fugiendumve ſit. Ita fit ut ratio præſit appetitus obtemperet."

This diviſion of our active principles can hardly indeed be accounted a diſcovery of philoſophy, becauſe it has been common to the unlearned in all ages of the world, and ſeems to be dictated by the common ſenſe of mankind.

What I would now obſerve concerning this common diviſion of our active powers, is, that the leading principle, which is called *reaſon*, comprehends both a regard to what is right and honourable, and a regard to our happineſs upon the whole.

Although theſe be really two diſtinct principles of action, it is very natural to comprehend them under one name, becauſe both are leading principles, both ſuppoſe the uſe of reaſon, and, when rightly underſtood, both lead to the ſame courſe of

of life. They are like two fountains whoſe ſtreams unite and run in the ſame channel.

When a man, on one occaſion, conſults his real happineſs in things not inconſiſtent with his duty, though in oppoſition to the ſolicitation of appetite or paſſion; and when, on another occaſion, without any ſelfiſh conſideration, he does what is right and honourable, becauſe it is ſo; in both theſe caſes, he acts reaſonably; every man approves of his conduct, and calls it reaſonable, or according to reaſon.

So that, when we ſpeak of reaſon as a principle of action in man, it includes a regard both to the *honeſtum* and to the *utile*. Both are combined under one name; and accordingly the dictates of both, in the Latin tongue, were combined under the name *officium*, and in the Greek under καθῆκον.

If we examine the abſtract notion of duty, or moral obligation, it appears to be neither any real quality of the action conſidered by itſelf, nor of the agent conſidered without reſpect to the action, but a certain relation between the one and the other.

When we ſay a man ought to do ſuch a thing, the *ought*, which expreſſes the moral obligation, has a reſpect, on the one hand, to the perſon who ought, and, on the other, to the action which he ought to do. Thoſe two correlates are eſſential to every moral obligation; take away either, and it has no exiſtence. So that, if we ſeek the place

of

of moral obligation among the categories, it belongs to the category of *relation*.

There are many relations of things, of which we have the moſt diſtinct conception, without being able to define them logically. Equality and proportion are relations between quantities, which every man underſtands, but no man can define.

Moral obligation is a relation of its own kind, which every man underſtands, but is perhaps too ſimple to admit of logical definition. Like all other relations, it may be changed or annihilated, by a change in any of the two related things, I mean the agent or the action.

Perhaps it may not be improper to point out briefly the circumſtances, both in the action and in the agent, which are neceſſary to conſtitute moral obligation. The univerſal agreement of men in theſe, ſhews that they have one and the ſame notion of it.

With regard to the action, it muſt be a voluntary action, or preſtation of the perſon obliged, and not of another. There can be no moral obligation upon a man to be ſix feet high. Nor can I be under a moral obligation that another perſon ſhould do ſuch a thing. His actions muſt be imputed to himſelf, and mine only to me, either for praiſe or blame.

I need hardly mention, that a perſon can be under a moral obligation, only to things within the ſphere of his natural power.

As

As to the party obliged, it is evident, there can be no moral obligation upon an inanimate thing. To ſpeak of moral obligation upon a ſtone or a tree is ridiculous, becauſe it contradicts every man's notion of moral obligation.

The perſon obliged muſt have underſtanding and will, and ſome degree of active power. He muſt not only have the natural faculty of underſtanding, but the means of knowing his obligation. An invincible ignorance of this deſtroys all moral obligation.

The opinion of the agent in doing the action gives it its moral denomination. If he does a materially good action, without any belief of its being good, but from ſome other principle, it is no good action in him. And if he does it with the belief of its being ill, it is ill in him.

Thus, if a man ſhould give to his neighbour a potion which he really believes will poiſon him, but which, in the event, proves ſalutary, and does much good; in moral eſtimation, he is a poiſoner, and not a benefactor.

Theſe qualifications of the action and of the agent, in moral obligation, are ſelf-evident; and the agreement of all men in them ſhows, that all men have the ſame notion and a diſtinct notion of moral obligation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Senſe of Duty.

WE are next to conſider, how we learn to judge and determine, that this is right, and that is wrong.

The abſtract notion of moral good and ill would be of no uſe to direct our life, if we had not the power of applying it to particular actions, and determining what is morally good, and what is morally ill.

Some Philoſophers, with whom I agree, aſcribe this to an original power or faculty in man, which they call the *moral ſenſe*, the *moral faculty*, *conſcience*. Others think, that our moral ſentiments may be accounted for without ſuppoſing any original ſenſe or faculty appropriated to that purpoſe, and go into very different ſyſtems to account for them.

I am not, at preſent, to take any notice of thoſe ſyſtems, becauſe the opinion firſt mentioned ſeems to me to be the truth, to wit, That, by an original power of the mind, when we come to years of underſtanding and reflection, we not only have the notions of right and wrong in conduct, but perceive certain things to be right, and others to be wrong.

The name of the *moral ſenſe*, though more frequently given to conſcience ſince Lord SHAFTESBURY and Dr HUTCHESON wrote, is not new. The *ſenſus recti et honeſti* is a phraſe not unfrequent among the ancients, neither is the *ſenſe of duty* among us.

It has got this name of *ſenſe*, no doubt, from ſome analogy which it is conceived to bear to the external ſenſes. And if we have juſt notions of the office of the external ſenſes, the analogy is very evident, and I ſee no reaſon too take offence, as ſome have done, at the name of the *moral ſenſe*.

The offence taken at this name ſeems to be owing to this, That Philoſophers have degraded the ſenſes too much, and deprived them of the moſt important part of their office.

We are taught, that, by the ſenſes, we have only certain ideas which we could not have otherwiſe. They are repreſented as powers by which we have ſenſations and ideas, not as powers by which we judge.

This notion of the ſenſes I take to be very lame, and to contradict what nature and accurate reflection teach concerning them.

A man who has totally loſt the ſenſe of ſeeing, may retain very diſtinct notions of the various colours; but he cannot judge of colours, becauſe he has loſt the ſenſe by which alone he could judge. By my eyes I not only have the ideas of a ſquare and a circle, but I perceive this ſurface to be a ſquare, that to be a circle.

By

By my ear, I not only have the idea of ſounds, loud and ſoft, acute and grave, but I immediately perceive and judge this ſound to be loud, that to be ſoft, this to be acute, that to be grave. Two or more ſynchronous ſounds I perceive to be concordant, others to be diſcordant.

Theſe are judgments of the ſenſes. They have always been called and accounted ſuch, by thoſe whoſe minds are not tinctured by philoſophical theories. They are the immediate teſtimony of Nature by our ſenſes; and we are ſo conſtituted by Nature, that we muſt receive their teſtimony, for no other reaſon but becauſe it is given by our ſenſes.

In vain do Sceptics endeavour to overturn this evidence by metaphyſical reaſoning. Though we ſhould not be able to anſwer their arguments, we believe our ſenſes ſtill, and reſt our moſt important concerns upon their teſtimony.

If this be a juſt notion of our external ſenſes, as I conceive it is, our moral faculty may, I think, without impropriety, be called the *moral ſenſe*.

In its dignity it is, without doubt, far ſuperior to every other power of the mind; but there is this analogy between it and the external ſenſes, That, as by them we have not only the original conceptions of the various qualities of bodies, but the original judgments that this body has ſuch a quality, that ſuch another; ſo by our moral faculty, we have both the original conceptions of right and wrong in conduct, of merit

and demerit, and the original judgments that this conduct is right, that is wrong; that this character has worth, that, demerit.

The teſtimony of our moral faculty, like that of the external ſenſes, is the teſtimony of Nature, and we have the ſame reaſon to rely upon it.

The truths immediately teſtified by the external ſenſes are the firſt principles from which we reaſon, with regard to the material world, and from which all our knowledge of it is deduced.

The truths immediately teſtified by our moral faculty, are the firſt principles of all moral reaſoning, from which all our knowledge of our duty muſt be deduced.

By moral reaſoning, I underſtand all reaſoning that is brought to prove that ſuch conduct is right, and deſerving of moral approbation, or that it is wrong, or that it is indifferent, and, in itſelf, neither morally good nor ill.

I think all we can properly call moral judgments are reducible to one or other of theſe, as all human actions, conſidered in a moral view, are either good, or bad, or indifferent.

I know the term *moral reaſoning* is often uſed by good writers in a more extenſive ſenſe; but as the reaſoning I now ſpeak of is of a peculiar kind, diſtinct from all others, and therefore ought to have a diſtinct name, I take the liberty to limit the name of *moral reaſoning* to this kind.

Let it be underſtood therefore, that in the reaſoning I call *moral*, the concluſion always is,

That ſomething in the conduct of moral agents is good or bad, in a greater or a leſs degree, or indifferent.

All reaſoning muſt be grounded on firſt principles. This holds in moral reaſoning, as in all other kinds. There muſt therefore be in morals, as in all other ſciences, firſt or ſelf-evident principles, on which all moral reaſoning is grounded, and on which it ultimately reſts. From ſuch ſelf-evident principles, concluſions may be drawn ſynthetically with regard to the moral conduct of life; and particular duties or virtues may be traced back to ſuch principles, analytically. But, without ſuch principles, we can no more eſtabliſh any concluſion in morals, than we can build a caſtle in the air, without any foundation.

An example or two will ſerve to illuſtrate this.

It is a firſt principle in morals, That we ought not to do to another, what we ſhould think wrong to be done to us in like circumſtances. If a man is not capable of perceiving this in his cool moments, when he reflects ſeriouſly, he is not a moral agent, nor is he capable of being convinced of it by reaſoning.

From what topic can you reaſon with ſuch a man? You may poſſibly convince him by reaſoning, that it is his intereſt to obſerve this rule; but this is not to convince him that it is his duty. To reaſon about juſtice with a man who ſees nothing to be juſt or unjuſt; or about benevolence with a man who ſees nothing in bene-

volence preferable to malice, is like reaſoning with a blind man about colour, or with a deaf man about ſound.

It is a queſtion in morals that admits of reaſoning, Whether, by the law of Nature, a man ought to have only one wife?

We reaſon upon this queſtion, by balancing the advantages and diſadvantages to the family, and to ſociety in general, that are naturally conſequent both upon monogamy and polygamy. And if it can be ſhewn that the advantages are greatly upon the ſide of monogamy, we think the point is determined.

But, if a man does not perceive that he ought to regard the good of ſociety, and the good of his wife and children, the reaſoning can have no effect upon him, becauſe he denies the firſt principle upon which it is grounded.

Suppoſe again, that we reaſon for monogamy from the intention of Nature, diſcovered by the proportion of males and of females that are born; a proportion which correſponds perfectly with monogamy, but by no means with polygamy. This argument can have no weight with a man who does not perceive that he ought to have a regard to the intention of Nature.

Thus we ſhall find that all moral reaſonings reſt upon one or more firſt principles of morals, whoſe truth is immediately perceived without reaſoning, by all men come to years of underſtanding.

And

And this indeed is common to every branch of human knowledge that deſerves the name of ſcience. There muſt be firſt principles proper to that ſcience, by which the whole ſuperſtructure is ſupported.

The firſt principles of all the ſciences, muſt be the immediate dictates of our natural faculties; nor is it poſſible that we ſhould have any other evidence of their truth. And in different ſciences the faculties which dictate their firſt principles are very different.

Thus, in aſtronomy and in optics, in which ſuch wonderful diſcoveries have been made, that the unlearned can hardly believe them to be within the reach of human capacity, the firſt principles are phænomena atteſted ſolely by that little organ, the human eye. If we diſbelieve its report, the whole of thoſe two noble fabrics of ſcience falls to pieces like the viſions of the night.

The principles of muſic all depend upon the teſtimony of the ear. The principles of natural philoſophy, upon the facts atteſted by the ſenſes. The principles of mathematics, upon the neceſſary relations of quantities conſidered abſtractly, ſuch as, That equal quantities added to equal quantities make equal ſums, and the like; which neceſſary relations are immediately perceived by the underſtanding.

The ſcience of politics borrows its principles from what we know by experience of the cha-

racter and conduct of man. We conſider not what he ought to be, but what he is, and thence conclude what part he will act in different ſituations and circumſtances. From ſuch principles we reaſon concerning the cauſes and effects of different forms of government, laws, cuſtoms, and manners. If man were either a more perfect or a more imperfect, a better or a worſe creature than he is, politics would be a different ſcience from what it is.

The firſt principles of morals are the immediate dictates of the moral faculty. They ſhew us, not what man is, but what he ought to be. Whatever is immediately perceived to be juſt, honeſt, and honourable, in human conduct, carries moral obligation along with it, and the contrary carries demerit and blame; and, from thoſe moral obligations that are immediately perceived, all other moral obligations muſt be deduced by reaſoning.

He that will judge of the colour of an object, muſt conſult his eyes, in a good light, when there is no medium or contiguous objects that may give it a falſe tinge. But in vain will he conſult every other faculty in this matter.

In like manner, he that will judge of the firſt principles of morals, muſt conſult his conſcience, or moral faculty, when he is calm and diſpaſſionate, unbiaſſed by intereſt, affection, or faſhion.

As we rely upon the clear and diſtinct teſtimony of our eyes, concerning the colours and figures

figures of the bodies about us, we have the ſame reaſon to rely with ſecurity upon the clear and unbiaſſed teſtimony of our conſcience, with regard to what we ought and ought not to do. In many caſes, moral worth and demerit are diſcerned no leſs clearly by the laſt of thoſe natural faculties, than figure and colour by the firſt.

The faculties which Nature hath given us, are the only engines we can uſe to find out the truth. We cannot indeed prove that thoſe faculties are not fallacious, unleſs GOD ſhould give us new faculties to ſit in judgment upon the old. But we are born under a neceſſity of truſting them.

Every man in his ſenſes believes his eyes, his ears, and his other ſenſes. He believes his conſciouſneſs, with reſpect to his own thoughts and purpoſes, his memory, with regard to what is paſt, his underſtanding, with regard to abſtract relations of things, and his taſte, with regard to what is elegant and beautiful. And he has the ſame reaſon, and, indeed, is under the ſame neceſſity of believing the clear and unbiaſſed dictates of his conſcience, with regard to what is honourable and what is baſe.

The ſum of what has been ſaid in this chapter is, That, by an original power of the mind, which we call *conſcience*, or the *moral faculty*, we have the conceptions of right and wrong in human conduct, of merit and demerit, of duty and moral obligation, and our other moral conceptions; and that, by the ſame faculty, we perceive

perceive ſome things in human conduct to be right, and others to be wrong; that the firſt principles of morals are the dictates of this faculty; and that we have the ſame reaſon to rely upon thoſe dictates, as upon the determinations of our ſenſes, or of our other natural faculties.

CHAP. VII.

Of moral Approbation and Diſapprobation.

OUR moral judgments are not like thoſe we form in ſpeculative matters, dry and unaffecting, but, from their nature, are neceſſarily accompanied with affections and feelings; which we are now to conſider.

It was before obſerved, that every human action, conſidered in a moral view, appears to us good, or bad, or indifferent. When we judge the action to be indifferent, neither good nor bad, though this be a moral judgment, it produces no affection nor feeling, any more than our judgments in ſpeculative matters.

But we approve of good actions, and diſapprove of bad; and this approbation and diſapprobation, when we analyſe it, appears to include, not only a moral judgment of the action, but ſome affection, favourable or unfavourable, towards the agent, and ſome feeling in ourſelves.

Nothing is more evident than this, That moral worth, even in a ſtranger, with whom we have not the leaſt connection, never fails to pro-

duce ſome degree of eſteem mixed with good will.

The eſteem which we have for a man on account of his moral worth, is different from that which is grounded upon his intellectual accompliſhments, his birth, fortune, and connection with us.

Moral worth, when it is not ſet off by eminent abilities, and external advantages, is like a diamond in the mine, which is rough and unpoliſhed, and perhaps cruſted over with ſome baſer material that takes away its luſtre.

But, when it is attended with theſe advantages, it is like a diamond cut, poliſhed, and ſet. Then its luſtre attracts every eye. Yet theſe things which add ſo much to its appearance, add but little to its real value.

We muſt further obſerve, that eſteem and benevolent regard, not only accompany real worth by the conſtitution of our nature, but are perceived to be really and properly due to it; and that, on the contrary, unworthy conduct really merits diſlike and indignation.

There is no judgment of the heart of man more clear, or more irreſiſtible, than this, That eſteem and regard are really due to good conduct, and the contrary to baſe and unworthy conduct. Nor can we conceive a greater depravity in the heart of man, than it would be to ſee and acknowledge worth without feeling any reſpect to it; or to ſee and acknowledge the higheſt

higheſt worthleſſneſs without any degree of diſlike and indignation.

The eſteem that is due to worthy conduct, is not leſſened when a man is conſcious of it in himſelf. Nor can he help having ſome eſteem for himſelf, when he is conſcious of thoſe qualities for which he moſt highly eſteems others.

Self-eſteem, grounded upon external advantages, or the gifts of fortune, is pride. When it is grounded upon a vain conceit of inward worth which we do not poſſeſs, it is arrogance and ſelf-deceit. But when a man, without thinking of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, is conſcious of that integrity of heart, and uprightneſs of conduct, which he moſt highly eſteems in others, and values himſelf duly upon this account; this perhaps may be called the pride of virtue, but it is not a vicious pride. It is a noble and magnanimous diſpoſition, without which there can be no ſteady virtue.

A man who has a character with himſelf, which he values, will diſdain to act in a manner unworthy of it. The language of his heart will be like that of JOB, "My righteouſneſs I "hold faſt, and will not let it go; my heart "ſhall not reproach me while I live."

A good man owes much to his character with the world, and will be concerned to vindicate it from unjuſt imputations. But he owes much more to his character with himſelf. For if his heart

heart condemns him not, he has confidence towards GOD; and he can more eaſily bear the laſh of tongues, than the reproach of his own mind.

The ſenſe of honour, ſo much ſpoken of, and ſo often miſapplied, is nothing elſe, when rightly underſtood, but the diſdain which a man of worth feels to do a diſhonourable action, though it ſhould never be known nor ſuſpected.

A good man will have a much greater abhorrence againſt doing a bad action, than even againſt having it unjuſtly imputed to him. The laſt may give a wound to his reputation, but the firſt gives a wound to his conſcience, which is more difficult to heal, and more painful to endure.

Let us, on the other hand, conſider how we are affected by diſapprobation, either of the conduct of others, or of our own.

Every thing we diſapprove in the conduct of a man, leſſens him in our eſteem. There are indeed brilliant faults, which, having a mixture of good and ill in them, may have a very different aſpect, according to the ſide on which we view them.

In ſuch faults of our friends, and much more of ourſelves, we are diſpoſed to view them on the beſt ſide, and on the contrary ſide in thoſe to whom we are ill affected.

This partiality, in taking things by the beſt or by the worſt handle, is the chief cauſe of wrong

wrong judgment with regard to the character of others, and of ſelf-deceit with regard to our own.

But when we take complex actions to pieces, and view every part by itſelf, ill conduct of every kind leſſens our eſteem of a man, as much as good conduct increaſes it. It is apt to turn love into indifference, indifference into contempt, and contempt into averſion and abhorrence.

When a man is conſcious of immoral conduct in himſelf, it leſſens his ſelf-eſteem. It depreſſes and humbles his ſpirit, and makes his countenance to fall. He could even puniſh himſelf for his miſbehaviour, if that could wipe out the ſtain. There is a ſenſe of diſhonour and worthleſſneſs ariſing from guilt, as well as a ſenſe of honour and worth ariſing from worthy conduct. And this is the caſe, even if a man could conceal his guilt from all the world.

We are next to conſider the agreeable or uneaſy feelings, in the breaſt of the ſpectator or judge, which naturally accompany moral approbation and diſapprobation.

There is no affection that is not accompanied with ſome agreeable or uneaſy emotion. It has often been obſerved, that all the benevolent affections give pleaſure, and the contrary ones pain, in one degree or another.

When we contemplate a noble character, though but in ancient hiſtory, or even in fiction;

tion; like a beautiful object, it gives a lively and pleaſant emotion to the ſpirits. It warms the heart, and invigorates the whole frame. Like the beams of the ſun, it enlivens the face of Nature, and diffuſes heat and light all around.

We feel a ſympathy with every noble and worthy character that is repreſented to us. We rejoice in his proſperity, we are afflicted in his diſtreſs. We even catch ſome ſparks of that celeſtial fire that animated his conduct, and feel the glow of his virtue and magnanimity.

This ſympathy is the neceſſary effect of our judgment of his conduct, and of the approbation and eſteem due to it; for real ſympathy is always the effect of ſome benevolent affection, ſuch as eſteem, love, pity, or humanity.

When the perſon whom we approve is connected with us by acquaintance, friendſhip, or blood, the pleaſure we derive from his conduct is greatly increaſed. We claim ſome property in his worth, and are apt to value ourſelves on account of it. This ſhews a ſtronger degree of ſympathy, which gathers ſtrength from every ſocial tie.

But the higheſt pleaſure of all is, when we are conſcious of good conduct in ourſelves. This, in ſacred ſcripture, is called the *teſtimony of a good conſcience;* and it is repreſented, not only in the ſacred writings, but in the writings of all moraliſts, of every age and ſect, as the pureſt,

pureſt, the moſt noble and valuable of all human enjoyments.

Surely, were we to place the chief happineſs of this life (a thing that has been ſo much ſought after) in any one kind of enjoyment, that which ariſes from the conſciouſneſs of integrity, and a uniform endeavour to act the beſt part in our ſtation, would moſt juſtly claim the preference to all other enjoyments the human mind is capable of, on account of its dignity, the intenſeneſs of the happineſs it affords, its ſtability and duration, its being in our power, and its being proof againſt all accidents of time and fortune.

On the other hand, the view of a vicious character, like that of an ugly and deformed object, is diſagreeable. It gives diſguſt and abhorrence.

If the unworthy perſon be nearly connected with us, we have a very painful ſympathy indeed. We bluſh even for the ſmaller faults of thoſe we are connected with, and feel ourſelves, as it were, diſhonoured by their ill conduct.

But, when there is a high degree of depravity in any perſon connected with us, we are deeply humbled and depreſſed by it. The ſympathetic feeling has ſome reſemblance to that of guilt, though it be free from all guilt. We are aſhamed to ſee our acquaintance; we would, if poſſible, diſclaim all connection with the guilty perſon.

perſon. We wiſh to tear him from our hearts, and to blot him out of our remembrance.

Time, however, alleviates thoſe ſympathetic ſorrows which ariſe from bad behaviour in our friends and connections, if we are conſcious that we had no ſhare in their guilt.

The wiſdom of GOD, in the conſtitution of our nature, hath intended, that this ſympathetic diſtreſs ſhould intereſt us the more deeply in the good behaviour, as well as in the good fortune, of our friends; and that thereby friendſhip, relation, and every ſocial tie, ſhould be aiding to virtue and unfavourable to vice.

How common is it, even in vicious parents, to be deeply afflicted when their children go into theſe courſes in which perhaps they have gone before them, and, by their example, ſhewn them the way.

If bad conduct in thoſe in whom we are intereſted, be uneaſy and painful, it is ſo much more when we are conſcious of it in ourſelves. This uneaſy feeling has a name in all languages. We call it *remorſe*.

It has been deſcribed in ſuch frightful colours by writers ſacred and profane, by writers of every age and of every perſuaſion, even by Epicureans, that I will not attempt the deſcription of it.

It is on account of the uneaſineſs of this feeling, that bad men take ſo much pains to get rid of it, and to hide, even from their own eyes,

as much as poſſible, the pravity of their conduct. Hence ariſe all the arts of ſelf-deceit, by which men varniſh their crimes, or endeavour to waſh out the ſtain of guilt. Hence the various methods of expiation which ſuperſtition has invented, to ſolace the conſcience of the criminal, and give ſome cooling to his parched breaſt. Hence alſo ariſe, very often, the efforts of men of bad hearts to excel in ſome amiable quality, which may be a kind of counterpoiſe to their vices, both in the opinion of others and in their own.

For no man can bear the thought of being abſolutely deſtitute of all worth. The conſciouſneſs of this would make him deteſt himſelf, hate the light of the ſun, and fly, if poſſible, out of exiſtence.

I have now endeavoured to delineate the natural operations of that principle of action in man, which we call the *moral ſenſe*, the *moral faculty*, *conſcience*. We know nothing of our natural faculties, but by their operations within us. Of their operations in our own minds, we are conſcious, and we ſee the ſigns of their operations in the minds of others. Of this faculty the operations appear to be, the judging ultimately of what is right, what is wrong, and what is indifferent, in the conduct of moral agents; the approbation of good conduct and diſapprobation of bad in conſequence of that judgment, and the agreeable emotions which attend

attend obedience, and diſagreeable which attend diſobedience to its dictates.

The Supreme Being, who has given us eyes to diſcern what may be uſeful and what hurtful to our natural life, hath alſo given us this light within to direct our moral conduct.

Moral conduct is the buſineſs of every man; and therefore the knowledge of it ought to be within the reach of all.

EPICURUS reaſoned acutely and juſtly to ſhew, that a regard to our preſent happineſs ſhould induce us to the practice of temperance, juſtice, and humanity. But the bulk of mankind cannot follow long trains of reaſoning. The loud voice of the paſſions drowns the calm and ſtill voice of reaſoning.

Conſcience commands and forbids with more authority, and, in the moſt common and moſt important points of conduct, without the labour of reaſoning. Its voice is heard by every man, and cannot be diſregarded with impunity.

The ſenſe of guilt makes a man at variance with himſelf. He ſees that he is what he ought not to be. He has fallen from the dignity of his nature, and has ſold his real worth for a thing of no value. He is conſcious of demerit, and cannot avoid the dread of meeting with its reward.

On the other hand, he who pays a ſacred regard to the dictates of his conſcience, cannot fail of a preſent reward, and a reward propor-

tioned to the exertion required in doing his duty.

The man who, in oppoſition to ſtrong temptation, by a noble effort, maintains his integrity, is the happieſt man on earth. The more ſevere his conflict has been, the greater is his triumph. The conſciouſneſs of inward worth gives ſtrength to his heart, and makes his countenance to ſhine. Tempeſts may beat and floods roar; but he ſtands firm as a rock, in the joy of a good conſcience, and confidence of divine approbation.

To this I ſhall only add, what every man's conſcience dictates, That he who does his duty, from the conviction that it is right and honourable, and what he ought to do, acts from a nobler principle, and with more inward ſatisfaction, than he who is bribed to do it, merely from the conſideration of a reward preſent or future.

CHAP. VIII.

Obſervations concerning Conſcience.

I SHALL now conclude this Eſſay with ſome obſervations concerning this power of the mind which we call *conſcience*, by which its nature may be better underſtood.

The *firſt* is, That like all our other powers, it comes to maturity by inſenſible degrees, and may

may be much aided in its ſtrength and vigour by proper culture.

All the human faculties have their infancy and their ſtate of maturity.

The faculties which we have in common with the brutes appear firſt, and have the quickeſt growth. In the firſt period of life, children are not capable of diſtinguiſhing right from wrong in human conduct; neither are they capable of abſtract reaſoning in matters of ſcience. Their judgment of moral conduct, as well as their judgment of truth, advances by inſenſible degrees, like the corn and the graſs.

In vegetables, firſt the blade or the leaf appears, then the flower, and laſt of all the fruit, the nobleſt production of the three, and that for which the others were produced. Theſe ſucceed one another in a regular order. They require moiſture and heat and air and ſhelter to bring them to maturity, and may be much improved by culture. According to the variations of ſoil, ſeaſon and culture, ſome plants are brought to much greater perfection than others of the ſame ſpecies. But no variation of culture or ſeaſon or ſoil can make grapes grow from thorns, or figs from thiſtles.

We may obſerve a ſimilar progreſs in the faculties of the mind: For there is a wonderful analogy among all the works of GOD, from the leaſt even to the greateſt.

The faculties of man unfold themſelves in a certain order, appointed by the great Creator. In their gradual progreſs, they may be greatly aſſiſted or retarded, improved or corrupted, by education, inſtruction, example, exerciſe, and by the ſociety and converſation of men, which, like ſoil and culture in plants, may produce great changes to the better or to the worſe.

But theſe means can never produce any new faculties, nor any other than were originally planted in the mind by the Author of Nature. And what is common to the whole ſpecies, in all the varieties of inſtruction and education, of improvement and degeneracy, is the work of God, and not the operation of ſecond cauſes.

Such we may juſtly account conſcience, or the faculty of diſtinguiſhing right conduct from wrong; ſince it appears, and in all nations and ages has appeared, in men that are come to maturity.

The ſeeds, as it were, of moral diſcernment are planted in the mind by him that made us. They grow up in their proper ſeaſon, and are at firſt tender and delicate, and eaſily warped. Their progreſs depends very much upon their being duly cultivated and properly exerciſed.

It is ſo with the power of reaſoning, which all acknowledge to be one of the moſt eminent natural faculties of man. It appears not in infancy. It ſprings up, by inſenſible degrees, as we grow to maturity. But its ſtrength and vigour depend ſo much upon its being duly cultivated

vated and exerciſed, that we ſee many individuals, nay many nations, in which it is hardly to be perceived.

Our intellectual diſcernment is not ſo ſtrong and vigorous by nature, as to ſecure us from errors in ſpeculation. On the contrary, we ſee a great part of mankind, in every age, ſunk in groſs ignorance of things that are obvious to the more enlightened, and fettered by errors and falſe notions, which the human underſtanding, duly improved, eaſily throws off.

It would be extremely abſurd, from the errors and ignorance of mankind, to conclude that there is no ſuch thing as truth; or that man has not a natural faculty of diſcerning it, and diſtinguiſhing it from error.

In like manner, our moral diſcernment of what we ought, and what we ought not to do, is not ſo ſtrong and vigorous by nature, as to ſecure us from very groſs miſtakes with regard to our duty.

In matters of conduct, as well as in matters of ſpeculation, we are liable to be miſled by prejudices of education, or by wrong inſtruction. But, in matters of conduct, we are alſo very liable to have our judgment warped by our appetites and paſſions, by faſhion, and by the contagion of evil example.

We muſt not therefore think, becauſe man has the natural power of diſcerning what is right and what is wrong, that he has no need

of inſtruction; that this power has no need of cultivation and improvement; that he may ſafely rely upon the ſuggeſtions of his mind, or upon opinions he has got, he knows not how.

What ſhould we think of a man who, becauſe he has by nature the power of moving all his limbs, ſhould therefore conclude that he needs not be taught to dance, or to fence, to ride, or to ſwim? All theſe exerciſes are performed by that power of moving our limbs, which we have by nature; but they will be performed very awkwardly and imperfectly by thoſe who have not been trained to them, and practiſed in them.

What ſhould we think of the man who, becauſe he has the power by nature of diſtinguiſhing what is true from what is falſe, ſhould conclude that he has no need to be taught mathetics, or natural philoſophy, or other ſciences? It is by the natural power of human underſtanding that every thing in thoſe ſciences has been diſcovered, and that the truths they contain are diſcerned. But the underſtanding left to itſelf, without the aid of inſtruction, training, habit, and exerciſe, would make very ſmall progreſs, as every one ſees, in perſons uninſtructed in thoſe matters.

Our natural power of diſcerning between right and wrong, needs the aid of inſtruction, education, exerciſe, and habit, as well as our other natural powers.

There

There are perſons who, as the Scripture ſpeaks, have, by reaſon of uſe, their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil; by that means, they have a much quicker, clearer, and more certain judgment in morals than others.

The man who neglects the means of improvement in the knowledge of his duty, may do very bad things, while he follows the light of his mind. And though he be not culpable for acting according to his judgment, he may be very culpable for not uſing the means of having his judgment better informed.

It may be obſerved, That there are truths, both ſpeculative and moral, which a man left to himſelf would never diſcover; yet, when they are fairly laid before him, he owns and adopts them, not barely upon the authority of his teacher, but upon their own intrinſic evidence, and perhaps wonders that he could be ſo blind as not to ſee them before.

Like a man whoſe ſon has been long abroad, and ſuppoſed dead. After many years the ſon returns, and is not known by his father. He would never find that this is his ſon. But, when he diſcovers himſelf, the father ſoon finds, by many circumſtances, that this is his ſon who was loſt, and can be no other perſon.

Truth has an affinity with the human underſtanding, which error hath not. And right principles of conduct have an affinity with a candid mind, which wrong principles have not.

When

When they are ſet before it in a juſt light, a well diſpoſed mind recogniſes this affinity, feels their authority, and perceives them to be genuine. It was this, I apprehend, that led PLATO to conceive that the knowledge we acquire in the preſent ſtate, is only reminiſcence of what, in a former ſtate, we were acquainted with.

A man born and brought up in a ſavage nation, may be taught to purſue injury with unrelenting malice, to the deſtruction of his enemy. Perhaps when he does ſo, his heart does not condemn him.

Yet, if he be fair and candid, and, when the tumult of paſſion is over, have the virtues of clemency, generoſity, and forgiveneſs, laid before him, as they were taught and exemplified by the divine Author of our religion, he will ſee, that it is more noble to overcome himſelf, and ſubdue a ſavage paſſage, than to deſtroy his enemy. He will ſee, that to make a friend of an enemy, and to overcome evil with good, is the greateſt of all victories, and gives a manly and a rational delight, with which the brutiſh paſſion of revenge deſerves not to be compared. He will ſee that hitherto he acted like a man to his friends, but like a brute to his enemies; now he knows how to make his whole character conſiſtent, and one part of it to harmonize with another.

He muſt indeed be a great ſtranger to his own heart, and to the ſtate of human nature, who does

does not ſee that he has need of all the aid which his ſituation affords him, in order to know how he ought to act in many caſes that occur.

A *ſecond* obſervation is, That conſcience is peculiar to man. We ſee not a veſtige of it in brute-animals. It is one of thoſe prerogatives by which we are raiſed above them.

Brute-animals have many faculties in common with us. They ſee, and hear, and taſte, and ſmell, and feel. They have their pleaſures and pains. They have various inſtincts and appetites. They have an affection for their offſpring, and ſome of them for their herd or flock. Dogs have a wonderful attachment to their maſters, and give manifeſt ſigns of ſympathy with them.

We ſee, in brute-animals, anger and emulation, pride and ſhame. Some of them are capable of being trained by habit, and by rewards and puniſhments, to many things uſeful to man.

All this muſt be granted; and if our perception of what we ought, and what we ought not to do, could be reſolved into any of theſe principles, or into any combination of them, it would follow, that ſome brutes are moral agents, and accountable for their conduct.

But common ſenſe revolts againſt this concluſion. A man who ſeriouſly charged a brute with a crime, would be laughed at. They may do actions hurtful to themſelves, or to man. They may have qualities, or acquire habits, that lead

lead to ſuch actions; and this is all we mean when we call them vicious. But they cannot be immoral; nor can they be virtuous. They are not capable of ſelf-government; and, when they act according to the paſſion or habit which is ſtrongeſt at the time, they act according to the nature that GOD has given them, and no more can be required of them.

They cannot lay down a rule to themſelves, which they are not to tranſgreſs, though prompted by appetite, or ruffled by paſſion. We ſee no reaſon to think that they can form the conception of a general rule, or of obligation to adhere to it.

They have no conception of a promiſe or contract; nor can you enter into any treaty with them. They can neither affirm nor deny, nor reſolve, nor plight their faith. If Nature had made them capable of theſe operations, we ſhould ſee the ſigns of them in their motions and geſtures.

The moſt ſagacious brutes never invented a language, nor learned the uſe of one before invented. They never formed a plan of government, nor tranſmitted inventions to their poſterity.

Theſe things, and many others that are obvious to common obſervation, ſhew, that there is juſt reaſon why mankind have always conſidered the brute-creation as deſtitute of the nobleſt faculties with which GOD hath endowed man,

man, and particularly of that faculty which makes us moral and accountable beings.

The *next* obſervation is, That conſcience is evidently intended by Nature to be the immediate guide and director of our conduct, after we arrive at the years of underſtanding.

There are many things which, from their nature and ſtructure, ſhew intuitively the end for which they were made.

A man who knows the ſtructure of a watch or clock, can have no doubt in concluding that it was made to meaſure time. And he that knows the ſtructure of the eye, and the properties of light, can have as little doubt whether it was made that we might ſee by it.

In the fabric of the body, the intention of the ſeveral parts is, in many inſtances, ſo evident, as to leave no poſſibility of doubt. Who can doubt whether the muſcles were intended to move the parts in which they were inſerted? Whether the bones were intended to give ſtrength and ſupport to the body; and ſome of them to guard the parts which they incloſe?

When we attend to the ſtructure of the mind, the intention of its various original powers is no leſs evident. Is it not evident, that the external ſenſes are given, that we may diſcern thoſe qualities of bodies which may be uſeful or hurtful to us. Memory, that we may retain the knowledge we have acquired: Judgment and

and underſtanding, that we may diſtinguiſh what is true from what is falſe?

The natural appetites of hunger and thirſt, the natural affections of parents to their offſpring, and of relations to each other, the natural docility and credulity of children, the affections of pity and ſympathy with the diſtreſſed, the attachment we feel to neighbours, to acquaintance, and to the laws and conſtitution of our country; theſe are parts of our conſtitution, which plainly point out their end, ſo that he muſt be blind, or very inattentive, who does not perceive it. Even the paſſions of anger and reſentment, appear very plainly to be a kind of defenſive armour, given by our Maker to guard us againſt injuries, and to deter the injurious.

Thus it holds generally with regard both to the intellectual and active powers of man, that the intention for which they are given is written in legible characters upon the face of them.

Nor is this the caſe of any of them more evidently than of conſcience. Its intention is manifeſtly implied in its office; which is, to ſhew us what is good, what bad, and what indifferent in human conduct.

It judges of every action before it is done. For we can rarely act ſo precipitately, but we have the conſciouſneſs that what we are about to do is right, or wrong, or indifferent. Like the bodily eye, it naturally looks forward, though

though its attention may be turned back to the paſt.

To conceive, as ſome ſeem to have done, that its office is only to reflect on paſt actions, and to approve or diſapprove, is, as if a man ſhould conceive, that the office of his eyes is only to look back upon the road he has travelled, and to ſee whether it be clean or dirty; a miſtake which no man can make who has made the proper uſe of his eyes.

Conſcience preſcribes meaſures to every appetite, affection, and paſſion, and ſays to every other principle of action, So far thou mayeſt go, but no farther.

We may indeed tranſgreſs its dictates, but we cannot tranſgreſs them with innocence, nor even with impunity.

We condemn ourſelves, or, in the language of Scripture, *our heart condemns us*, whenever we go beyond the rules of right and wrong which conſcience preſcribes.

Other principles of action may have more ſtrength, but this only has authority. Its ſentence makes us guilty to ourſelves, and guilty in the eyes of our Maker, whatever other principle may be ſet in oppoſition to it.

It is evident therefore, that this principle has, from its nature, an authority to direct and determine with regard to our conduct; to judge, to acquit, or to condemn, and even to puniſh;

an

an authority which belongs to no other principle of the human mind.

It is the candle of the LORD ſet up within us, to guide our ſteps. Other principles may urge and impel, but this only authoriſes. Other principles ought to be controlled by this; this may be, but never ought to be, controlled by any other, and never can be with innocence.

The authority of conſcience over the other active principles of the mind, I do not conſider as a point that requires proof by argument, but as ſelf-evident. For it implies no more than this, That in all caſes a man ought to do his duty. He only who does in all caſes what he ought to do, is the perfect man.

Of this perfection in the human nature, the Stoics formed the idea, and held it forth in their writings as the goal to which the race of life ought to be directed. Their *wiſe man* was one in whom a regard to the *honeſtum* ſwallowed up every other principle of action.

The *wiſe man* of the Stoics, like the *perfect orator* of the rhetoricians, was an ideal character, and was, in ſome reſpects, carried beyond nature; yet it was perhaps the moſt perfect model of virtue, that ever was exhibited to the heathen world; and ſome of thoſe who copied after it, were ornaments to human nature.

The *laſt* obſervation is, That the moral faculty or conſcience is both an active and an intellectual power of the mind.

It

It is an active power, as every truly virtuous action muſt be more or leſs influenced by it. Other principles may concur with it, and lead the ſame way; but no action can be called morally good, in which a regard to what is right has not ſome influence. Thus a man who has no regard to juſtice, may pay his juſt debt, from no other motive, but that he may not be thrown into priſon. In this action there is no virtue at all.

The moral principle, in particular caſes, may be oppoſed by any of our animal principles. Paſſion or appetite may urge to what we know to be wrong. In every inſtance of this kind, the moral principle ought to prevail, and the more difficult its conqueſt is, it is the more glorious.

In ſome caſes, a regard to what is right may be the ſole motive, without the concurrence or oppoſition of any other principle of action; as when a judge or an arbiter determines a plea between two indifferent perſons, ſolely from a regard to juſtice.

Thus we ſee, that conſcience, as an active principle, ſometimes concurs with other active principles, ſometimes oppoſes them, and ſometimes is the ſole principle of action.

I endeavoured before to ſhew, that a regard to our own good upon the whole is not only a rational principle of action, but a leading principle, to which all our animal principles are

ſubordinate. As there are, therefore, two regulating or leading principles in the conſtitution of man, a regard to what is beſt for us upon the whole, and a regard to duty, it may be aſked, Which of theſe ought to yield if they happen to interfere?

Some well meaning perſons have maintained, That all regard to ourſelves and to our own happineſs ought to be extinguiſhed; that we ſhould love virtue for its own ſake only, even though it were to be accompanied with eternal miſery.

This ſeems to have been the extravagance of ſome Myſtics, which perhaps they were led into, in oppoſition to a contrary extreme of the ſchoolmen of the middle ages, who made the deſire of good to ourſelves to be the ſole motive to action, and virtue to be approvable only on account of its preſent or future reward.

Juſter views of human nature will teach us to avoid both theſe extremes.

On the one hand, the diſintereſted love of virtue is undoubtedly the nobleſt principle in human nature, and ought never to ſtoop to any other.

On the other hand, there is no active principle which GOD hath planted in our nature that is vicious in itſelf, or that ought to be eradicated, even if it were in our power.

They are all uſeful and neceſſary in our preſent ſtate. The perfection of human nature conſiſts,

conſiſts, not in extinguiſhing, but in reſtraining them within their proper bounds, and keeping them in due ſubordination to the governing principles.

As to the ſuppoſition of an oppoſition between the two governing principles, that is, between a regard to our happineſs upon the whole, and a regard to duty, this ſuppoſition is merely imaginary. There can be no ſuch oppoſition.

While the world is under a wiſe and benevolent adminiſtration, it is impoſſible, that any man ſhould, in the iſſue, be a loſer by doing his duty. Every man, therefore, who believes in God, while he is careful to do his duty, may ſafely leave the care of his happineſs to Him who made him. He is conſcious that he conſults the laſt moſt effectually, by attending to the firſt.

Indeed, if we ſuppoſe a man to be an atheiſt in his belief, and, at the ſame time, by wrong judgment, to believe that virtue is contrary to his happineſs upon the whole, this caſe, as Lord SHAFTESBURY juſtly obſerves, is without remedy. It will be impoſſible for the man to act, ſo as not to contradict a leading principle of his nature. He muſt either ſacrifice his happineſs to virtue, or virtue to happineſs; and is reduced to this miſerable dilemma, whether it be beſt to be a fool or a knave.

This ſhews the ſtrong connection between morality and the principles of natural religion;

as the laſt only can ſecure a man from the poſſibility of an apprehenſion, that he may play the fool by doing his duty.

Hence, even Lord SHAFTESBURY, in his graveſt work, concludes, *That virtue without piety is incomplete.* Without piety, it loſes its brighteſt example, its nobleſt object, and its firmeſt ſupport.

I conclude with obſerving, That conſcience, or the moral faculty, is likewiſe an intellectual power.

By it ſolely we have the original conceptions or ideas of right and wrong in human conduct. And of right and wrong, there are not only many different degrees, but many different ſpecies. Juſtice and injuſtice, gratitude and ingratitude, benevolence and malice, prudence and folly, magnanimity and meanneſs, decency and indecency, are various moral forms, all comprehended under the general notion of right and wrong in conduct, all of them objects of moral approbation or diſapprobation, in a greater or a leſs degree.

The conception of theſe, as moral qualities, we have by our moral faculty; and by the ſame faculty, when we compare them together, we perceive various moral relations among them. Thus, we perceive, that juſtice is entitled to a ſmall degree of praiſe, but injuſtice to a high degree of blame; and the ſame may be ſaid of gratitude and its contrary. When juſtice

and

and gratitude interfere, gratitude muſt give place to juſtice, and unmerited beneficence muſt give place to both.

Many ſuch relations between the various moral qualities compared together, are immediately diſcerned by our moral faculty. A man needs only to conſult his own heart to be convinced of them.

All our reaſonings in morals, in natural juriſprudence, in the law of nations, as well as our reaſonings about the duties of natural religion, and about the moral government of the Deity, muſt be grounded upon the dictates of our moral faculty, as firſt principles.

As this faculty, therefore, furniſhes the human mind with many of its original conceptions or ideas, as well as with the firſt principles of many important branches of human knowledge, it may juſtly be accounted an intellectual, as well as an active power of the mind.

ESSAY IV.

OF THE LIBERTY OF MORAL AGENTS.

CHAP. I.

The Notions of Moral Liberty and Neceſſity ſtated.

BY the *liberty* of a moral agent, I underſtand, a power over the determinations of his own will.

If, in any action, he had power to will what he did, or not to will it, in that action he is free. But if, in every voluntary action, the determination of his will be the neceſſary conſequence of ſomething involuntary in the ſtate of his mind, or of ſomething in his external circumſtances, he is not free; he has not what I call the liberty of a moral agent, but is ſubject to neceſſity.

This liberty ſuppoſes the agent to have underſtanding and will; for the determinations of the will are the ſole object about which this power is employed; and there can be no will without,

without, at leaſt, ſuch a degree of underſtanding as gives the conception of that which we will.

The liberty of a moral agent implies, not only a conception of what he wills, but ſome degree of practical judgment or reaſon.

For, if he has not the judgment to diſcern one determination to be preferable to another, either in itſelf, or for ſome purpoſe which he intends, what can be the uſe of a power to determine? His determinations muſt be made perfectly in the dark, without reaſon, motive or end. They can neither be right nor wrong, wiſe nor fooliſh. Whatever the conſequences may be, they cannot be imputed to the agent, who had not the capacity of foreſeeing them, or of perceiving any reaſon for acting otherwiſe than he did.

We may perhaps be able to conceive a being endowed with power over the determinations of his will, without any light in his mind to direct that power to ſome end. But ſuch power would be given in vain. No exerciſe of it could be either blamed or approved. As Nature gives no power in vain, I ſee no ground to aſcribe a power over the determinations of the will to any being who has no judgment to apply it to the direction of his conduct, no diſcernment of what he ought or ought not to do.

For that reaſon, in this Eſſay, I ſpeak only of the liberty of moral agents, who are capable of

acting well or ill, wiſely or fooliſhly, and this, for diſtinction's ſake, I ſhall call *moral liberty*.

What kind, or what degree of liberty belongs to brute animals, or to our own ſpecies, before any uſe of reaſon, I do not know. We acknowledge that they have not the power of ſelf-government. Such of their actions as may be called *voluntary*, ſeem to be invariably determined by the paſſion or appetite, or affection or habit, which is ſtrongeſt at the time.

This ſeems to be the law of their conſtitution, to which they yield, as the inanimate creation does, without any conception of the law, or any intention of obedience.

But of civil or moral government, which are addreſſed to the rational powers, and require a conception of the law and an intentional obedience, they are, in the judgment of all mankind, incapable. Nor do I ſee what end could be ſerved by giving them a power over the determinations of their own will, unleſs to make them intractable by diſcipline, which we ſee they are not.

The effect of moral liberty is, That it is in the power of the agent to do well or ill. This power, like every other gift of GOD, may be abuſed. The right uſe of this gift of GOD is to do well and wiſely, as far as his beſt judgment can direct him, and thereby merit eſteem and approbation. The abuſe of it is to act contrary to what he knows or ſuſpects to be his duty and his

his wiſdom, and thereby juſtly merit diſapprobation and blame.

By *neceſſity*, I underſtand the want of that moral liberty which I have above defined.

If there can be a better and a worſe in actions on the ſyſtem of neceſſity, let us ſuppoſe a man neceſſarily determined in all caſes to will and to do what is beſt to be done, he would ſurely be innocent and inculpable. But, as far as I am able to judge, he would not be entitled to the eſteem and moral approbation of thoſe who knew and believed this neceſſity. What was, by an ancient author, ſaid of CATO, might indeed be ſaid of him. *He was good becauſe he could not be otherwiſe.* But this ſaying, if underſtood literally and ſtrictly, is not the praiſe of CATO, but of his conſtitution, which was no more the work of CATO, than his exiſtence.

On the other hand, if a man be neceſſarily determined to do ill, this caſe ſeems to me to move pity, but not diſapprobation. He was ill, becauſe he could not be otherwiſe. Who can blame him? Neceſſity has no law.

If he knows that he acted under this neceſſity, has he not juſt ground to exculpate himſelf? The blame, if there be any, is not in him, but in his conſtitution. If he be charged by his Maker with doing wrong, may he not expoſtulate with him, and ſay, Why haſt thou made me thus? I may be ſacrificed at thy pleaſure, for the common good, like a man that has the plague,

plague, but not for ill deſert; for thou knoweſt that what I am charged with is thy work, and not mine.

Such are my notions of moral liberty and neceſſity, and of the conſequences inſeparably connected with both the one and the other.

This moral liberty a man may have, though it do not extend to all his actions, or even to all his voluntary actions. He does many things by inſtinct, many things by the force of habit without any thought at all, and conſequently without will. In the firſt part of life, he has not the power of ſelf-government any more than the brutes. That power over the determinations of his own will, which belongs to him in ripe years, is limited, as all his powers are; and it is perhaps beyond the reach of his underſtanding to define its limits with preciſion. We can only ſay, in general, that it extends to every action for which he is accountable.

This power is given by his Maker, and at his pleaſure whoſe gift it is, it may be enlarged or diminiſhed, continued or withdrawn. No power in the creature can be independent of the Creator. His hook is in its noſe; he can give it line as far as he ſees fit, and, when he pleaſes, can reſtrain it, or turn it whitherſoever he will. Let this be always underſtood, when we aſcribe liberty to man, or to any created being.

Suppoſing it therefore to be true, That man is a free agent, it may be true, at the ſame time, that

that his liberty may be impaired or loſt, by diſorder of body or mind, as in melancholy, or in madneſs; it may be impaired or loſt by vicious habits; it may, in particular caſes, be reſtrained by divine interpoſition.

We call man a free agent in the ſame way as we call him a reaſonable agent. In many things he is not guided by reaſon, but by principles ſimilar to thoſe of the brutes. His reaſon is weak at beſt. It is liable to be impaired or loſt, by his own fault, or by other means. In like manner, he may be a free agent, though his freedom of action may have many ſimilar limitations.

The liberty I have deſcribed has been repreſented by ſome Philoſophers as inconceivable, and as involving an abſurdity.

"Liberty, they ſay, conſiſts only in a power "to act as we will; and it is impoſſible to con- "ceive in any being a greater liberty than this. "Hence it follows, that liberty does not extend "to the determinations of the will, but only to "the actions conſequent to its determination, "and depending upon the will. To ſay that "we have power to will ſuch an action, is to "ſay, that we may will it, if we will. This "ſuppoſes the will to be determined by a prior "will; and, for the ſame reaſon, that will muſt "be determined by a will prior to it, and ſo on "in an infinite ſeries of wills, which is abſurd. "To act freely, therefore, can mean nothing "more than to act voluntarily; and this is all

"the

ſubordinate. As there are, therefore, two regulating or leading principles in the conſtitution of man, a regard to what is beſt for us upon the whole, and a regard to duty, it may be aſked, Which of theſe ought to yield if they happen to interfere?

Some well meaning perſons have maintained, That all regard to ourſelves and to our own happineſs ought to be extinguiſhed; that we ſhould love virtue for its own ſake only, even though it were to be accompanied with eternal miſery.

This ſeems to have been the extravagance of ſome Myſtics, which perhaps they were led into, in oppoſition to a contrary extreme of the ſchoolmen of the middle ages, who made the deſire of good to ourſelves to be the ſole motive to action, and virtue to be approvable only on account of its preſent or future reward.

Juſter views of human nature will teach us to avoid both theſe extremes.

On the one hand, the diſintereſted love of virtue is undoubtedly the nobleſt principle in human nature, and ought never to ſtoop to any other.

On the other hand, there is no active principle which GOD hath planted in our nature that is vicious in itſelf, or that ought to be eradicated, even if it were in our power.

They are all uſeful and neceſſary in our preſent ſtate. The perfection of human nature conſiſts,

conſiſts, not in extinguiſhing, but in reſtraining them within their proper bounds, and keeping them in due ſubordination to the governing principles.

As to the ſuppoſition of an oppoſition between the two governing principles, that is, between a regard to our happineſs upon the whole, and a regard to duty, this ſuppoſition is merely imaginary. There can be no ſuch oppoſition.

While the world is under a wiſe and benevolent adminiſtration, it is impoſſible, that any man ſhould, in the iſſue, be a loſer by doing his duty. Every man, therefore, who believes in God, while he is careful to do his duty, may ſafely leave the care of his happineſs to Him who made him. He is conſcious that he conſults the laſt moſt effectually, by attending to the firſt.

Indeed, if we ſuppoſe a man to be an atheiſt in his belief, and, at the ſame time, by wrong judgment, to believe that virtue is contrary to his happineſs upon the whole, this caſe, as Lord SHAFTESBURY juſtly obſerves, is without remedy. It will be impoſſible for the man to act, ſo as not to contradict a leading principle of his nature. He muſt either ſacrifice his happineſs to virtue, or virtue to happineſs; and is reduced to this miſerable dilemma, whether it be beſt to be a fool or a knave.

This ſhews the ſtrong connection between morality and the principles of natural religion;

as the laſt only can ſecure a man from the poſſibility of an apprehenſion, that he may play the fool by doing his duty.

Hence, even Lord SHAFTESBURY, in his graveſt work, concludes, *That virtue without piety is incomplete.* Without piety, it loſes its brighteſt example, its nobleſt object, and its firmeſt ſupport.

I conclude with obſerving, That conſcience, or the moral faculty, is likewiſe an intellectual power.

By it ſolely we have the original conceptions or ideas of right and wrong in human conduct. And of right and wrong, there are not only many different degrees, but many different ſpecies. Juſtice and injuſtice, gratitude and ingratitude, benevolence and malice, prudence and folly, magnanimity and meanneſs, decency and indecency, are various moral forms, all comprehended under the general notion of right and wrong in conduct, all of them objects of moral approbation or diſapprobation, in a greater or a leſs degree.

The conception of theſe, as moral qualities, we have by our moral faculty; and by the ſame faculty, when we compare them together, we perceive various moral relations among them. Thus, we perceive, that juſtice is entitled to a ſmall degree of praiſe, but injuſtice to a high degree of blame; and the ſame may be ſaid of gratitude and its contrary. When juſtice and

and gratitude interfere, gratitude muſt give place to juſtice, and unmerited beneficence muſt give place to both.

Many ſuch relations between the various moral qualities compared together, are immediately diſcerned by our moral faculty. A man needs only to conſult his own heart to be convinced of them.

All our reaſonings in morals, in natural juriſprudence, in the law of nations, as well as our reaſonings about the duties of natural religion, and about the moral government of the Deity, muſt be grounded upon the dictates of our moral faculty, as firſt principles.

As this faculty, therefore, furniſhes the human mind with many of its original conceptions or ideas, as well as with the firſt principles of many important branches of human knowledge; it may juſtly be accounted an intellectual, as well as an active power of the mind.

as the laſt only can ſecure a man from the poſſibility of an apprehenſion, that he may play the fool by doing his duty.

Hence, even Lord SHAFTESBURY, in his graveſt work, concludes, *That virtue without piety is incomplete.* Without piety, it loſes its brighteſt example, its nobleſt object, and its firmeſt ſupport.

I conclude with obſerving, That conſcience, or the moral faculty, is likewiſe an intellectual power.

By it ſolely we have the original conceptions or ideas of right and wrong in human conduct. And of right and wrong, there are not only many different degrees, but many different ſpecies. Juſtice and injuſtice, gratitude and ingratitude, benevolence and malice, prudence and folly, magnanimity and meanneſs, decency and indecency, are various moral forms, all comprehended under the general notion of right and wrong in conduct, all of them objects of moral approbation or diſapprobation, in a greater or a leſs degree.

The conception of theſe, as moral qualities, we have by our moral faculty; and by the ſame faculty, when we compare them together, we perceive various moral relations among them. Thus, we perceive, that juſtice is entitled to a ſmall degree of praiſe, but injuſtice to a high degree of blame; and the ſame may be ſaid of gratitude and its contrary. When juſtice

and

without, at leaſt, ſuch a degree of underſtanding as gives the conception of that which we will.

The liberty of a moral agent implies, not only a conception of what he wills, but ſome degree of practical judgment or reaſon.

For, if he has not the judgment to diſcern one determination to be preferable to another, either in itſelf, or for ſome purpoſe which he intends, what can be the uſe of a power to determine? His determinations muſt be made perfectly in the dark, without reaſon, motive or end. They can neither be right nor wrong, wiſe nor fooliſh. Whatever the conſequences may be, they cannot be imputed to the agent, who had not the capacity of foreſeeing them, or of perceiving any reaſon for acting otherwiſe than he did.

We may perhaps be able to conceive a being endowed with power over the determinations of his will, without any light in his mind to direct that power to ſome end. But ſuch power would be given in vain. No exerciſe of it could be either blamed or approved. As Nature gives no power in vain, I ſee no ground to aſcribe a power over the determinations of the will to any being who has no judgment to apply it to the direction of his conduct, no diſcernment of what he ought or ought not to do.

For that reaſon, in this Eſſay, I ſpeak only of the liberty of moral agents, who are capable of

acting well or ill, wiſely or fooliſhly, and this, for diſtinction's ſake, I ſhall call *moral liberty*.

What kind, or what degree of liberty belongs to brute animals, or to our own ſpecies, before any uſe of reaſon, I do not know. We acknowledge that they have not the power of ſelf-government. Such of their actions as may be called *voluntary*, ſeem to be invariably determined by the paſſion or appetite, or affection or habit, which is ſtrongeſt at the time.

This ſeems to be the law of their conſtitution, to which they yield, as the inanimate creation does, without any conception of the law, or any intention of obedience.

But of civil or moral government, which are addreſſed to the rational powers, and require a conception of the law and an intentional obedience, they are, in the judgment of all mankind, incapable. Nor do I ſee what end could be ſerved by giving them a power over the determinations of their own will, unleſs to make them intractable by diſcipline, which we ſee they are not.

The effect of moral liberty is, That it is in the power of the agent to do well or ill. This power, like every other gift of GOD, may be abuſed. The right uſe of this gift of GOD is to do well and wiſely, as far as his beſt judgment can direct him, and thereby merit eſteem and approbation. The abuſe of it is to act contrary to what he knows or ſuſpects to be his duty and his

his wiſdom, and thereby juſtly merit diſapprobation and blame.

By *neceſſity*, I underſtand the want of that moral liberty which I have above defined.

If there can be a better and a worſe in actions on the ſyſtem of neceſſity, let us ſuppoſe a man neceſſarily determined in all caſes to will and to do what is beſt to be done, he would ſurely be innocent and inculpable. But, as far as I am able to judge, he would not be entitled to the eſteem and moral approbation of thoſe who knew and believed this neceſſity. What was, by an ancient author, ſaid of CATO, might indeed be ſaid of him. *He was good becauſe he could not be otherwiſe.* But this ſaying, if underſtood literally and ſtrictly, is not the praiſe of CATO, but of his conſtitution, which was no more the work of CATO, than his exiſtence.

On the other hand, if a man be neceſſarily determined to do ill, this caſe ſeems to me to move pity, but not diſapprobation. He was ill, becauſe he could not be otherwiſe. Who can blame him? Neceſſity has no law.

If he knows that he acted under this neceſſity, has he not juſt ground to exculpate himſelf? The blame, if there be any, is not in him, but in his conſtitution. If he be charged by his Maker with doing wrong, may he not expoſtulate with him, and ſay, Why haſt thou made me thus? I may be ſacrificed at thy pleaſure, for the common good, like a man that has the plague,

plague, but not for ill deſert; for thou knoweſt that what I am charged with is thy work, and not mine.

Such are my notions of moral liberty and neceſſity, and of the conſequences inſeparably connected with both the one and the other.

This moral liberty a man may have, though it do not extend to all his actions, or even to all his voluntary actions. He does many things by inſtinct, many things by the force of habit without any thought at all, and conſequently without will. In the firſt part of life, he has not the power of ſelf-government any more than the brutes. That power over the determinations of his own will, which belongs to him in ripe years, is limited, as all his powers are; and it is perhaps beyond the reach of his underſtanding to define its limits with preciſion. We can only ſay, in general, that it extends to every action for which he is accountable.

This power is given by his Maker, and at his pleaſure whoſe gift it is, it may be enlarged or diminiſhed, continued or withdrawn. No power in the creature can be independent of the Creator. His hook is in its noſe; he can give it line as far as he ſees fit, and, when he pleaſes, can reſtrain it, or turn it whitherſoever he will. Let this be always underſtood, when we aſcribe liberty to man, or to any created being.

Suppoſing it therefore to be true, That man is a free agent, it may be true, at the ſame time, that

that his liberty may be impaired or loſt, by diſorder of body or mind, as in melancholy, or in madneſs; it may be impaired or loſt by vicious habits; it may, in particular caſes, be reſtrained by divine interpoſition.

We call man a free agent in the ſame way as we call him a reaſonable agent. In many things he is not guided by reaſon, but by principles ſimilar to thoſe of the brutes. His reaſon is weak at beſt. It is liable to be impaired or loſt, by his own fault, or by other means. In like manner, he may be a free agent, though his freedom of action may have many ſimilar limitations.

The liberty I have deſcribed has been repreſented by ſome Philoſophers as inconceivable, and as involving an abſurdity.

"Liberty, they ſay, conſiſts only in a power "to act as we will; and it is impoſſible to con- "ceive in any being a greater liberty than this. "Hence it follows, that liberty does not extend "to the determinations of the will, but only to "the actions conſequent to its determination, "and depending upon the will. To ſay that "we have power to will ſuch an action, is to "ſay, that we may will it, if we will. This "ſuppoſes the will to be determined by a prior "will; and, for the ſame reaſon, that will muſt "be determined by a will prior to it, and ſo on "in an infinite ſeries of wills, which is abſurd. "To act freely, therefore, can mean nothing "more than to act voluntarily; and this is all

"the

"the liberty that can be conceived in man, or "in any being."

This reaſoning, firſt, I think, advanced by HOBBES, has been very generally adopted by the defenders of neceſſity. It is grounded upon a definition of liberty totally different from that which I have given, and therefore does not apply to moral liberty, as above defined.

But it is ſaid that this is the only liberty that is poſſible, that is conceivable, that does not involve an abſurdity.

It is ſtrange, indeed! if the word *liberty* has no meaning but this one. I ſhall mention three all very common. The objection applies to one of them, but to neither of the other two.

Liberty is ſometimes oppoſed to external force or confinement of the body. Sometimes it is oppoſed to obligation by law, or by lawful authority. Sometimes it is oppoſed to neceſſity.

1. It is oppoſed to confinement of the body by ſuperior force. So we ſay a priſoner is ſet at liberty when his fetters are knocked off, and he is diſcharged from confinement. This is the liberty defined in the objection; and I grant that this liberty extends not to the will, neither does the confinement, becauſe the will cannot be confined by external force.

2. Liberty is oppoſed to obligation by law, or lawful authority. This liberty is a right to act one way or another, in things which the law has neither commanded nor forbidden; and this liberty

berty is meant when we ſpeak of a man's natural liberty, his civil liberty, his Chriſtian liberty. It is evident that this liberty, as well as the obligation oppoſed to it, extends to the will: For it is the will to obey that makes obedience; the will to tranſgreſs that makes a tranſgreſſion of the law. Without will there can be neither obedience nor tranſgreſſion. Law ſuppoſes a power to obey or to tranſgreſs; it does not take away this power, but propoſes the motives of duty and of intereſt, leaving the power to yield to them, or to take the conſequence of tranſgreſſion.

3. Liberty is oppoſed to neceſſity, and in this ſenſe it extends to the determinations of the will only, and not to what is conſequent to the will.

In every voluntary action, the determination of the will is the firſt part of the action, upon which alone the moral eſtimation of it depends. It has been made a queſtion among Philoſophers, Whether, in every inſtance, this determination be the neceſſary conſequence of the conſtitution of the perſon, and the circumſtances in which he is placed; or whether he had not power in many caſes, to determine this way or that?

This has, by ſome, been called the *philoſophical* notion of liberty and neceſſity; but it is by no means peculiar to Philoſophers. The loweſt of the vulgar have, in all ages, been prone to have recourſe to this neceſſity, to exculpate themſelves or their friends in what they do wrong,

wrong, though, in the general tenor of their conduct, they act upon the contrary principle.

Whether this notion of moral liberty be conceivable or not, every man muſt judge for himſelf. To me there appears no difficulty in conceiving it. I conſider the determination of the will as an effect. This effect muſt have a cauſe which had power to produce it; and the cauſe muſt be either the perſon himſelf, whoſe will it is, or ſome other being. The firſt is as eaſily conceived as the laſt. If the perſon was the cauſe of that determination of his own will, he was free in that action, and it is juſtly imputed to him, whether it be good or bad. But, if another being was the cauſe of this determination, either by producing it immediately, or by means and inſtruments under his direction, then the determination is the act and deed of that being, and is ſolely imputable to him.

But it is ſaid, "That nothing is in our power "but what depends upon the will, and there- "fore the will itſelf cannot be in our power."

I anſwer, That this is a fallacy ariſing from taking a common ſaying in a ſenſe which it never was intended to convey, and in a ſenſe contrary to what it neceſſarily implies.

In common life, when men ſpeak of what is, or is not, in a man's power, they attend only to the external and viſible effects, which only can be perceived, and which only can affect them. Of theſe, it is true, that nothing is in a man's power,

power, but what depends upon his will, and this is all that is meant by this common ſaying.

But this is ſo far from excluding his will from being in his power, that it neceſſarily implies it. For to ſay that what depends upon the will is in a man's power, but the will is not in his power, is to ſay that the end is in his power, but the means neceſſary to that end are not in his power, which is a contradiction.

In many propoſitions which we expreſs univerſally, there is an exception neceſſarily implied, and therefore always underſtood. Thus when we ſay that all things depend upon GOD, GOD himſelf is neceſſarily excepted. In like manner, when we ſay, that all that is in our power depends upon the will, the will itſelf is neceſſarily excepted: For if the will be not, nothing elſe can be in our power. Every effect muſt be in the power of its cauſe. The determination of the will is an effect, and therefore muſt be in the power of its cauſe, whether that cauſe be the agent himſelf, or ſome other being.

From what has been ſaid in this chapter, I hope the notion of moral liberty will be diſtinctly underſtood, and that it appears that this notion is neither inconceivable, nor involves any abſurdity or contradiction.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Words Cauſe and Effect, Action, and Active Power.

THE writings upon liberty and neceſſity have been much darkened, by the ambiguity of the words uſed in reaſoning upon that ſubject. The words *cauſe* and *effect*, *action*, and *active power*, *liberty* and *neceſſity*, are related to each other: The meaning of one determines the meaning of the reſt. When we attempt to define them, we can only do it by ſynonymous words which need definition as much. There is a ſtrict ſenſe in which thoſe words muſt be uſed, if we ſpeak and reaſon clearly about moral liberty; but to keep to this ſtrict ſenſe is difficult, becauſe in all languages, they have, by cuſtom, got a great latitude of ſignification.

As we cannot reaſon about moral liberty, without uſing thoſe ambiguous words, it is proper to point out, as diſtinctly as poſſible, their proper and original meaning, in which they ought to be underſtood in treating of this ſubject, and to ſhew from what cauſes they have become ſo ambiguous in all languages, as to darken and embarraſs our reaſonings upon it.

Every thing that begins to exiſt, muſt have a cauſe of its exiſtence, which had power to give it exiſtence. And every thing that undergoes

goes any change, muſt have ſome cauſe of that change.

That neither exiſtence, nor any mode of exiſtence, can begin without an efficient cauſe, is a principle that appears very early in the mind of man; and it is ſo univerſal, and ſo firmly rooted in human nature, that the moſt determined ſcepticiſm cannot eradicate it.

It is upon this principle that we ground the rational belief of a deity. But that is not the only uſe to which we apply it. Every man's conduct is governed by it every day, and almoſt every hour of his life. And if it were poſſible for any man to root out this principle from his mind, he muſt give up every thing that is called common prudence, and be fit only to be confined as inſane.

From this principle it follows, That every thing which undergoes any change, muſt either be the efficient cauſe of that change in itſelf, or it muſt be changed by ſome other being.

In the *firſt* caſe it is ſaid to have *active power*, and to *act* in producing that change. In the *ſecond* caſe it is merely *paſſive*, or is *acted upon*, and the active power is in that being only which produces the change.

The name of a *cauſe* and of an *agent*, is properly given to that being only, which, by its active power, produces ſome change in itſelf, or in ſome other being. The change, whether it be of thought, of will, or of motion, is the *ef-*

fect. Active power, therefore, is a quality in the cauſe, which enables it to produce the effect. And the exertion of that active power in producing the effect, is called *action, agency, efficiency.*

In order to the production of any effect, there muſt be in the cauſe, not only power, but the exertion of that power: For power that is not exerted produces no effect.

All that is neceſſary to the production of any effect, is power in an efficient cauſe to produce the effect, and the exertion of that power: For it is a contradiction to ſay, that the cauſe has power to produce the effect, and exerts that power, and yet the effect is not produced. The effect cannot be in his power unleſs all the means neceſſary to its production be in his power.

It is no leſs a contradiction to ſay, that a cauſe has power to produce a certain effect, but that he cannot exert that power: For power which cannot be exerted is no power, and is a contradiction in terms.

To prevent miſtake, it is proper to obſerve, That a being may have a power at one time which it has not at another. It may commonly have a power, which, at a particular time, it has not. Thus, a man may commonly have power to walk or to run; but he has not this power when aſleep, or when he is confined by ſuperior force. In common language, he may be ſaid to have a power which he cannot then exert. But this popular expreſſion means only that

that he commonly has this power, and will have it when the cauſe is removed which at preſent deprives him of it: For, when we ſpeak ſtrictly and philoſophically, it is a contradiction to ſay that he has this power, at that moment when he is deprived of it.

Theſe, I think, are neceſſary conſequences from the principle firſt mentioned, That every change which happens in nature muſt have an efficient cauſe which had power to produce it.

Another principle, which appears very early in the mind of man, is, That we are efficient cauſes in our deliberate and voluntary actions.

We are conſcious of making an exertion, ſometimes with difficulty, in order to produce certain effects. An exertion made deliberately and voluntarily, in order to produce an effect, implies a conviction that the effect is in our power. No man can deliberately attempt what he does not believe to be in his power. The language of all mankind, and their ordinary conduct in life, demonſtrate, that they have a conviction of ſome active power in themſelves to produce certain motions in their own and in other bodies, and to regulate and direct their own thoughts. This conviction we have ſo early in life, that we have no remembrance when, or in what way, we acquired it.

That ſuch a conviction is at firſt the neceſſary reſult of our conſtitution, and that it can never be entirely obliterated, is, I think, acknowled-

ged by one of the moſt zealous defenders of neceſſity. *Free Diſcuſſion*, &c. *p.* 298. "Such are "the influences to which all mankind, without "diſtinction, are expoſed, that they neceſſarily "refer actions (I mean refer them ultimately) "firſt of all to themſelves and others; and it is a "long time before they begin to conſider them-"ſelves and others as inſtruments in the hand "of a ſuperior agent. Conſequently, the aſſo-"ciations which refer actions to themſelves, get "ſo confirmed, that they are never entirely ob-"literated; and therefore the common language, "and the common feelings of mankind, will be "adapted to the firſt, the limited and imperfect, "or rather erroneous, view of things."

It is very probable, that the very conception or idea of active power, and of efficient cauſes, is derived from our voluntary exertions in producing effects; and that, if we were not conſcious of ſuch exertions, we ſhould have no conception at all of a cauſe, or of active power, and conſequently no conviction of the neceſſity of a cauſe of every change which we obſerve in nature.

It is certain that we can conceive no kind of active power but what is ſimilar or analogous to that which we attribute to ourſelves; that is, a power which is exerted by will and with underſtanding. Our notion, even of Almighty power, is derived from the notion of human power, by removing from the former thoſe imperfections and limitations to which the latter is ſubjected.

It

It may be difficult to explain the origin of our conceptions and belief concerning efficient cauſes and active power. The common theory, that all our ideas are ideas of ſenſation or reflection, and that all our belief is a perception of the agreement or the diſagreement of thoſe ideas, appears to be repugnant, both to the idea of an efficient cauſe, and to the belief of its neceſſity.

An attachment to that theory has led ſome Philoſophers to deny that we have any conception of an efficient cauſe, or of active power, becauſe efficiency and active power are not ideas, either of ſenſation or reflection. They maintain, therefore, that a cauſe is only ſomething prior to the effect, and conſtantly conjoined with it. This is Mr HUME's notion of a cauſe, and ſeems to be adopted by Dr PRIESTLEY, who ſays, "That a cauſe cannot be defined to be "any thing, but *ſuch previous circumſtances as* "*are conſtantly followed by a certain effect*, the "conſtancy of the reſult making us conclude, "that there muſt be a *ſufficient reaſon*, in the "nature of the things, why it ſhould be pro-"duced in thoſe circumſtances."

But theory ought to ſtoop to fact, and not fact to theory. Every man who underſtands the language knows, that neither priority, nor conſtant conjunction, nor both taken together, imply efficiency. Every man, free from prejudice, muſt aſſent to what CICERO has ſaid: *Itaque non ſic cauſa intelligi debet, ut quod cuique antecedat, id et cauſa ſit, ſed quod cuique efficienter antecedit.*

The very diſpute, whether we have the conception of an efficient cauſe, ſhews that we have. For though men may diſpute about things which have no exiſtence, they cannot diſpute about things of which they have no conception.

What has been ſaid in this chapter is intended to ſhew, That the conception of cauſes, of action and of active power, in the ſtrict and proper ſenſe of theſe words, is found in the minds of all men very early, even in the dawn of their rational life. It is therefore probable, that, in all languages, the words by which theſe conceptions were expreſſed were at firſt diſtinct and unambiguous, yet it is certain, that, among the moſt enlightened nations, theſe words are applied to ſo many things of different natures, and uſed in ſo vague a manner, that it is very difficult to reaſon about them diſtinctly.

This phænomenon, at firſt view, ſeems very unaccountable. But a little reflection may ſatisfy us, that it is a natural conſequence of the ſlow and gradual progreſs of human knowledge.

And ſince the ambiguity of theſe words has ſo great influence upon our reaſoning about moral liberty, and furniſhes the ſtrongeſt objections againſt it, it is not foreign to our ſubject to ſhew whence it ariſes. When we know the cauſes that have produced this ambiguity, we ſhall be leſs in danger of being miſled by it, and the proper and ſtrict meaning of the words will more evidently appear.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Cauſes of the Ambiguity of thoſe Words.

WHEN we turn our attention to external objects, and begin to exerciſe our rational faculties about them, we find, that there are ſome motions and changes in them, which we have power to produce, and that they have many which muſt have ſome other cauſe. Either the objects muſt have life and active power, as we have, or they muſt be moved or changed by ſomething that has life and active power, as external objects are moved by us.

Our firſt thoughts ſeem to be, That the objects in which we perceive ſuch motion have underſtanding and active power as we have.

"Savages," ſays the Abbé RAYNAL, "wherever they ſee motion which they cannot account for, there they ſuppoſe a ſoul."

All men may be conſidered as ſavages in this reſpect, until they are capable of inſtruction, and of uſing their faculties in a more perfect manner than ſavages do.

The rational converſations of birds and beaſts in ÆSOP's Fables do not ſhock the belief of children. To them they have that probability which we require in an epic poem. Poets give us a great deal of pleaſure, by clothing every object with intellectual and moral attributes in

metaphor and in other figures. May not the pleaſure which we take in this poetical language, ariſe, in part, from its correſpondence with our earlieſt ſentiments?

However this may be, the Abbé RAYNAL's obſervation is ſufficiently confirmed, both from fact, and from the ſtructure of all languages.

Rude nations do really believe ſun, moon and ſtars, earth, ſea and air, fountains and lakes, to have underſtanding and active power. To pay homage to them, and implore their favour, is a kind of idolatry natural to ſavages.

All languages carry in their ſtructure the marks of their being formed when this belief prevailed. The diſtinction of verbs and participles into active and paſſive, which is found in all languages, muſt have been originally intended to diſtinguiſh what is really active from what is merely paſſive; and, in all languages, we find active verbs applied to thoſe objects, in which, according to the Abbé RAYNAL's obſervation, ſavages ſuppoſe a ſoul.

Thus we ſay the ſun riſes and ſets, and comes to the meridian, the moon changes, the ſea ebbs and flows, the winds blow. Languages were formed by men who believed theſe objects to have life and active power in themſelves. It was therefore proper and natural to expreſs their motions and changes by active verbs.

There is no ſurer way of tracing the ſentiments of nations before they have records than by

by the ſtructure of their language, which, notwithſtanding the changes produced in it by time, will always retain ſome ſignatures of the thoughts of thoſe by whom it was invented. When we find the ſame ſentiments indicated in the ſtructure of all languages, thoſe ſentiments muſt have been common to the human ſpecies when languages were invented.

When a few of ſuperior intellectual abilities find leiſure for ſpeculation, they begin to philoſophize, and ſoon diſcover, that many of thoſe objects which, at firſt, they believed to be intelligent and active, are really lifeleſs and paſſive. This is a very important diſcovery. It elevates the mind, emancipates from many vulgar ſuperſtitions, and invites to farther diſcoveries of the ſame kind.

As philoſophy advances, life and activity in natural objects retires, and leaves them dead and inactive. Inſtead of moving voluntarily, we find them to be moved neceſſarily; inſtead of acting, we find them to be acted upon; and Nature appears as one great machine, where one wheel is turned by another, that by a third; and how far this neceſſary ſucceſſion may reach, the Philoſopher does not know.

The weakneſs of human reaſon makes men prone, when they leave one extreme, to ruſh into the oppoſite; and thus philoſophy, even in its infancy, may lead men from idolatry and polytheiſm into atheiſm, and from aſcribing active power

power to inanimate beings, to conclude all things to be carried on by neceſſity.

Whatever origin we aſcribe to the doctrines of atheiſm and of fatal neceſſity, it is certain, that both may be traced almoſt as far back as philoſophy; and both appear to be the oppoſites of the earlieſt ſentiments of men.

It muſt have been by the obſervation and reaſoning of the ſpeculative *few*, that thoſe objects were diſcovered to be inanimate and inactive, to which the *many* aſcribed life and activity. But while the *few* are convinced of this, they muſt ſpeak the language of the *many* in order to be underſtood. So we ſee, that when the Ptolemaic ſyſtem of aſtronomy, which agrees with vulgar prejudice and with vulgar language, has been univerſally rejected by Philoſophers, they continue to uſe the phraſeology that is grounded upon it, not only in ſpeaking to the vulgar, but in ſpeaking to one another. They ſay, The ſun riſes and ſets, and moves annually through all the ſigns of the zodiac, while they believe that he never leaves his place.

In like manner, thoſe active verbs and participles, which were applied to the inanimate objects of nature, when they were believed to be really active, continue to be applied to them after they are diſcovered to be paſſive.

The forms of language, once eſtabliſhed by cuſtom, are not ſo eaſily changed as the notions on which they were originally founded. While the

the ſounds remain, their ſignification is gradually enlarged or altered. This is ſometimes found, even in thoſe ſciences in which the ſignification of words is the moſt accurate and preciſe. Thus, in arithmetic, the word *number*, among the ancients, always ſignified ſo many units, and it would have been abſurd to apply it either to unity or to any part of an unit; but now we call unity, or any part of unity, a *number*. With them, multiplication always increaſed a number, and diviſion diminiſhed it; but we ſpeak of multiplying by a fraction, which diminiſhes, and of dividing by a fraction, which increaſes the number. We ſpeak of dividing or multiplying by unity, which neither diminiſhes nor increaſes a number. Theſe forms of expreſſion, in the ancient language, would have been abſurd.

By ſuch changes, in the meaning of words, the language of every civilized nation reſembles old furniture new modelled, in which many things are put to uſes for which they were not originally intended, and for which they are not perfectly fitted.

This is one great cauſe of the imperfection of language, and it appears very remarkably in thoſe verbs and participles which are active in their form, but are frequently uſed ſo as to have nothing active in their ſignification.

Hence we are authoriſed by cuſtom to aſcribe action and active power to things which we believe

lieve to be paſſive. The proper and original ſignification of every word, which at firſt ſignified action and cauſation, is buried and loſt under that vague meaning which cuſtom has affixed to it.

That there is a real diſtinction, and perfect oppoſition, between acting and being acted upon, every man may be ſatisfied who is capable of reflection. And that this diſtinction is perceived by all men as ſoon as they begin to reaſon, appears by the diſtinction between active and paſſive verbs, which is original in all languages, though, from the cauſes that have been mentioned, they come to be confounded in the progreſs of human improvement.

Another way in which philoſophy has contributed very much to the ambiguity of the words under our conſideration, deſerves to be mentioned.

The firſt ſtep into natural philoſophy, and what hath commonly been conſidered as its ultimate end, is the inveſtigation of the cauſes of the phænomena of nature; that is, the cauſes of thoſe appearances in nature which are not the effects of human power. *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas*, is the ſentiment of every mind that has a turn to ſpeculation.

The knowledge of the cauſes of things promiſes no leſs the enlargement of human power than the gratification of human curioſity; and therefore, among the enlightened part of mankind,

kind, this knowledge has been purſued in all ages with an avidity proportioned to its importance.

In nothing does the difference between the intellectual powers of man and thoſe of brutes appear more conſpicuous than in this. For in them we perceive no deſire to inveſtigate the cauſes of things, nor indeed any ſign that they have the proper notion of a cauſe.

There is reaſon, however, to apprehend, that, in this inveſtigation, men have wandered much in the dark, and that their ſucceſs has by no means been equal to their deſire and expectation.

We eaſily diſcover an eſtabliſhed order and connection in the phænomena of nature. We learn, in many caſes, from what has happened, to know what will happen. The diſcoveries of this kind, made by common obſervation, are many, and are the foundation of common prudence in the conduct of life. Philoſophers, by more accurate obſervation and experiment, have made many more; by which arts are improved, and human power, as well as human knowledge, is enlarged.

But, as to the real cauſes of the phænomena of nature, how little do we know! All our knowledge of things external, muſt be grounded upon the information of our ſenſes; but cauſation and active power are not objects of ſenſe; nor is that always the cauſe of a phænomenon which

is

is prior to it, and conſtantly conjoined with it; otherwiſe night would be the cauſe of day, and day the cauſe of the following night.

It is to this day problematical, whether all the phænomena of the material ſyſtem be produced by the immediate operation of the Firſt Cauſe, according to the laws which his wiſdom determined, or whether ſubordinate cauſes are employed by him in the operations of nature; and, if they be, what their nature, their number, and their different offices are? And whether, in all caſes, they act by commiſſion, or, in ſome, according to their diſcretion?

When we are ſo much in the dark with regard to the real cauſes of the phænomena of nature, and have a ſtrong deſire to know them, it is not ſtrange, that ingenious men ſhould form numberleſs conjectures and theories, by which the ſoul, hungering for knowledge, is fed with chaff inſtead of wheat.

In a very ancient ſyſtem, love and ſtrife were made the cauſes of things. In the Pythagorean and Platonic ſyſtem, matter, ideas, and an intelligent mind. By ARISTOTLE, matter, form, and privation. DES CARTES thought, that matter, and a certain quantity of motion given at firſt by the Almighty, are ſufficient to account for all the phænomena of the natural world. LEIBNITZ, that the univerſe is made up of monades, active and precipient, which, by their active power

power received at firſt, produce all the changes they undergo.

While men thus wandered in the dark in ſearch of cauſes, unwilling to confeſs their diſappointment, they vainly conceived every thing they ſtumbled upon to be a cauſe, and the proper notion of a cauſe is loſt, by giving the name to numberleſs things which neither are nor can be cauſes.

This confuſion of various things under the name of cauſes, is the more eaſily tolerated, becauſe however hurtful it may be to ſound philoſophy, it has little influence upon the concerns of life. A conſtant antecedent, or concomitant, of the phænomenon whoſe cauſe is ſought, may anſwer the purpoſe of the inquirer, as well as if the real cauſe were known. Thus a ſailor deſires to know the cauſe of the tides, that he may know when to expect high water: He is told that it is high water when the moon is ſo many hours paſt the meridian: And now he thinks he knows the cauſe of the tides. What he takes for the cauſe anſwers his purpoſe, and his miſtake does him no harm.

Thoſe philoſophers ſeem to have had the juſteſt views of nature, as well as of the weakneſs of human underſtanding, who, giving up the pretence of diſcovering the cauſes of the operations of nature, have applied themſelves to diſcover, by obſervation and experiment, the rules, or

or laws of nature according to which the phænomena of nature are produced.

In compliance with cuſtom, or perhaps, to gratify the avidity of knowing the cauſes of things, we call the laws of nature cauſes and active powers. So we ſpeak of the powers of gravitation, of magnetiſm, of electricity.

We call them cauſes of many of the phænomena of nature; and ſuch they are eſteemed by the ignorant, and by the half learned.

But thoſe of juſter diſcernment ſee, that laws of nature are not agents. They are not endowed with active power, and therefore cannot be cauſes in the proper ſenſe. They are only the rules according to which the unknown cauſe acts.

Thus it appears, that our natural deſire to know the cauſes of the phænomena of nature, our inability to diſcover them, and the vain theories of Philoſophers employed in this ſearch, have made the word *cauſe*, and the related words, ſo ambiguous, and to ſignify ſo many things of different natures, that they have in a manner loſt their proper and original meaning, and yet we have no other words to expreſs it.

Every thing joined with the effect, and prior to it, is called its cauſe. An inſtrument, an occaſion, a reaſon, a motive, an end, are called cauſes. And the related words *effect*, *agent*, *power*, are extended in the ſame vague manner.

Were

Were it not that the terms *cauſe* and *agent* have loſt their proper meaning, in the crowd of meanings that have been given them, we ſhould immediately perceive a contradiction in the terms *neceſſary cauſe* and *neceſſary agent*. And although the looſe meaning of thoſe words is authorized by cuſtom, the arbiter of language, and therefore cannot be cenſured, perhaps cannot always be avoided, yet we ought to be upon our guard, that we be not miſled by it to conceive things to be the ſame which are eſſentially different.

To ſay that man is a free agent, is no more than to ſay, that in ſome inſtances he is truly an agent, and a cauſe, and is not merely acted upon as a paſſive inſtrument. On the contrary, to ſay that he acts from neceſſity, is to ſay that he does not act at all, that he is no agent, and that, for any thing we know, there is only one agent in the univerſe, who does every thing that is done, whether it be good or ill.

If this neceſſity be attributed even to the Deity, the conſequence muſt be, that there neither is, nor can be, a cauſe at all; that nothing acts, but every thing is acted upon; nothing moves, but every thing is moved; all is paſſion without action; all inſtrument without an agent; and that every thing that is, or was, or ſhall be, has that neceſſary exiſtence in its ſeaſon, which we commonly conſider as the prerogative of the Firſt Cauſe.

This I take to be the genuine, and the moſt tenable, ſyſtem of neceſſity. It was the ſyſtem of SPINOZA, though he was not the firſt that advanced it; for it is very ancient. And if this ſyſtem be true, our reaſoning to prove the exiſtence of a firſt cauſe of every thing that begins to exiſt, muſt be given up as fallacious.

If it be evident to the human underſtanding, as I take it to be, That what begins to exiſt muſt have an efficient cauſe, which had power to give or not to give it exiſtence; and if it be true, that effects well and wiſely fitted for the beſt purpoſes, demonſtrate intelligence, wiſdom, and goodneſs, in the efficient cauſe, as well as power, the proof of a Deity from theſe principles is very eaſy and obvious to all men that can reaſon.

If, on the other hand, our belief that every thing that begins to exiſt has a cauſe, be got only by experience; and if, as Mr HUME maintains, the only notion of a cauſe be ſomething prior to the effect, which experience has ſhewn to be conſtantly conjoined with ſuch an effect, I ſee not how, from theſe principles, it is poſſible to prove the exiſtence of an intelligent cauſe of the univerſe.

Mr HUME ſeems to me to reaſon juſtly from his definition of a cauſe, when, in the perſon of an Epicurean, he maintains, that with regard to a cauſe of the univerſe, we can conclude nothing; becauſe it is a ſingular effect. We have

no

no experience that ſuch effects are always conjoined with ſuch a cauſe. Nay, the cauſe which we aſſign to this effect, is a cauſe which no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee, and therefore experience cannot inform us that it has ever been conjoined with any effect. He ſeems to me to reaſon juſtly from his definition of a cauſe, when he maintains, that *any thing* may be the cauſe of any thing; ſince priority and conſtant conjunction is all that can be conceived in the notion of a cauſe.

Another zealous defender of the doctrine of neceſſity ſays, that "A cauſe cannot be defined "to be any thing but *ſuch previous circumſtances* "*as are conſtantly followed by a certain effect*, "the *conſtancy* of the reſult making us conclude, that there muſt be a *ſufficient reaſon*, in "the nature of things, why it ſhould be produced in thoſe circumſtances."

This ſeems to me to be Mr HUME's definition of a cauſe in other words, and neither more nor leſs; but I am far from thinking that the author of it will admit the conſequences which Mr HUME draws from it, however neceſſary they may appear to others.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Influence of Motives.

THE modern advocates for the doctrine of neceſſity lay the ſtreſs of their cauſe upon the influence of motives.

"Every deliberate action, they ſay, muſt "have a motive. When there is no motive on "the other ſide, this motive muſt determine the "agent: When there are contrary motives, the "ſtrongeſt muſt prevail: We reaſon from mens "motives to their actions, as we do from other "cauſes to their effects: If man be a free agent, "and be not governed by motives, all his ac- "tions muſt be mere caprice, rewards and pu- "niſhments can have no effect, and ſuch a be- "ing muſt be abſolutely ungovernable."

In order therefore to underſtand diſtinctly, in what ſenſe we aſcribe moral liberty to man, it is neceſſary to underſtand what influence we allow to motives. To prevent miſunderſtanding, which has been very common upon this point, I offer the following obſervations:

1. I grant that all rational beings are influenced, and ought to be influenced, by motives. But the influence of motives is of a very different nature from that of efficient cauſes. They are neither cauſes nor agents. They ſuppoſe an efficient cauſe, and can do nothing without it.

We

We cannot, without abſurdity, ſuppoſe a motive, either to act, or to be acted upon; it is equally incapable of action and of paſſion; becauſe it is not a thing that exiſts, but a thing that is conceived; it is what the ſchoolmen called an *ens rationis*. Motives, therefore, may *influence* to action, but they do not act. They may be compared to advice, or exhortation, which leaves a man ſtill at liberty. For in vain is advice given when there is not a power either to do, or to forbear, what it recommends. In like manner, motives ſuppoſe liberty in the agent, otherwiſe they have no influence at all.

It is a law of nature, with reſpect to matter, That every motion, and change of motion, is proportional to the force impreſſed, and in the direction of that force. The ſcheme of neceſſity ſuppoſes a ſimilar law to obtain in all the actions of intelligent beings; which, with little alteration, may be expreſſed thus: Every action, or change of action, in an intelligent being, is proportional to the force of motives impreſſed, and in the direction of that force.

The law of nature reſpecting matter, is grounded upon this principle, That matter is an inert, inactive ſubſtance, which does not act, but is acted upon; and the law of neceſſity muſt be grounded upon the ſuppoſition, That an intelligent being is an inert, inactive ſubſtance, which does not act, but is acted upon.

2. Rational beings, in proportion as they are wiſe and good, will act according to the beſt motives; and every rational being, who does otherwiſe, abuſes his liberty. The moſt perfect being, in every thing where there is a right and a wrong, a better and a worſe, always infallibly acts according to the beſt motives. This indeed is little elſe than an identical propoſition: For it is a contradiction to ſay, That a perfect being does what is wrong or unreaſonable. But to ſay, that he does not act freely, becauſe he always does what is beſt, is to ſay, That the proper uſe of liberty deſtroys liberty, and that liberty conſiſts only in its abuſe.

The moral perfection of the Deity conſiſts, not in having no power to do ill, otherwiſe, as Dr CLARKE juſtly obſerves, there would be no ground to thank him for his goodneſs to us any more than for his eternity or immenſity; but his moral perfection conſiſts in this, that, when he has power to do every thing, a power which cannot be reſiſted, he exerts that power only in doing what is wiſeſt and beſt. To be ſubject to neceſſity is to have no power at all; for power and neceſſity are oppoſites. We grant, therefore, that motives have influence, ſimilar to that of advice or perſuaſion; but this influence is perfectly conſiſtent with liberty, and indeed ſuppoſes liberty.

3. Whether every deliberate action muſt have a motive, depends on the meaning we put upon the

the word *deliberate*. If, by a deliberate action, we mean an action wherein motives are weighed, which ſeems to be the original meaning of the word, ſurely there muſt be motives, and contrary motives, otherwiſe they could not be weighed. But if a deliberate action means only, as it commonly does, an action done by a cool and calm determination of the mind, with forethought and will, I believe there are innumerable ſuch actions done without a motive.

This muſt be appealed to every man's conſciouſneſs. I do many trifling actions every day, in which, upon the moſt careful reflection, I am conſcious of no motive; and to ſay that I may be influenced by a motive of which I am not conſcious, is, in the firſt place, an arbitrary ſuppoſition without any evidence, and then, it is to ſay, that I may be convinced by an argument which never entered into my thought.

Caſes frequently occur, in which an end, that is of ſome importance, may be anſwered equally well by any one of ſeveral different means. In ſuch caſes, a man who intends the end finds not the leaſt difficulty in taking one of theſe means, though he be firmly perſuaded, that it has no title to be preferred to any of the others.

To ſay that this is a caſe that cannot happen, is to contradict the experience of mankind; for ſurely a man who has occaſion to lay out a ſhilling, or a guinea, may have two hundred that are of equal value, both to the giver and to the

receiver, any one of which will anſwer his purpoſe equally well. To ſay, that, if ſuch a caſe ſhould happen, the man could not execute his purpoſe, is ſtill more ridiculous, though it have the authority of ſome of the ſchoolmen, who determined, that the aſs, between two equal bundles of hay, would ſtand ſtill till it died of hunger.

If a man could not act without a motive, he would have no power at all; for motives are not in our power; and he that has not power over a neceſſary mean, has not power over the end.

That an action, done without any motive, can neither have merit nor demerit, is much inſiſted on by the writers for neceſſity, and triumphantly, as if it were the very hinge of the controverſy. I grant it to be a ſelf-evident propoſition, and I know no author that ever denied it.

How inſignificant ſoever, in moral eſtimation, the actions may be which are done without any motive, they are of moment in the queſtion concerning moral liberty. For, if there ever was any action of this kind, motives are not the ſole cauſes of human actions. And if we have the power of acting without a motive, that power, joined to a weaker motive, may counterbalance a ſtronger.

4. It can never be proved, That when there is a motive on one ſide only, that motive muſt determine the action.

According

According to the laws of reaſoning, the proof is incumbent on thoſe who hold the affirmative; and I have never ſeen a ſhadow of argument, which does not take for granted the thing in queſtion, to wit, that motives are the ſole cauſes of actions.

Is there no ſuch thing as wilfulneſs, caprice or obſtinacy, among mankind? If there be not, it is wonderful that they ſhould have names in all languages. If there be ſuch things, a ſingle motive, or even many motives, may be reſiſted.

5. When it is ſaid, That of contrary motives the ſtrongeſt always prevails, this can neither be affirmed nor denied with underſtanding, until we know diſtinctly what is meant by the ſtrongeſt motive.

I do not find, that thoſe who have advanced this as a ſelf-evident axiom, have ever attempted to explain what they mean by the ſtrongeſt motive, or have given any rule by which we may judge which of two motives is the ſtrongeſt.

How ſhall we know whether the ſtrongeſt motive always prevails, if we know not which is ſtrongeſt? There muſt be ſome teſt by which their ſtrength is to be tried, ſome balance in which they may be weighed, otherwiſe, to ſay that the ſtrongeſt motive always prevails, is to ſpeak without any meaning. We muſt therefore ſearch for this teſt or balance, ſince they who have laid ſo much ſtreſs upon this axiom, have left us wholly in the dark as to its mean-

ing. I grant, that when the contrary motives are of the ſame kind, and differ only in quantity, it may be eaſy to ſay which is the ſtrongeſt. Thus a bribe of a thouſand pounds is a ſtronger motive than a bribe of a hundred pounds. But when the motives are of different kinds, as money and fame, duty and worldly intereſt, health and ſtrength, riches and honour, by what rule ſhall we judge which is the ſtrongeſt motive?

Either we meaſure the ſtrength of motives, merely by their prevalence, or by ſome other ſtandard diſtinct from their prevalence.

If we meaſure their ſtrength merely by their prevalence, and by the ſtrongeſt motive mean only the motive that prevails, it will be true indeed that the ſtrongeſt motive prevails; but the propoſition will be identical, and mean no more than that the ſtrongeſt motive is the ſtrongeſt motive. From this ſurely no concluſion can be drawn.

If it ſhould be ſaid, That by the ſtrength of a motive is not meant its prevalence, but the cauſe of its prevalence; that we meaſure the cauſe by the effect, and from the ſuperiority of the effect conclude the ſuperiority of the cauſe, as we conclude that to be the heavieſt weight which bears down the ſcale: I anſwer, That, according to this explication of the axiom, it takes for granted that motives are the cauſes, and the ſole cauſes of actions. Nothing is left to the agent, but

to

to be acted upon by the motives, as the balance is by the weights. The axiom ſuppoſes, that the agent does not act, but is acted upon; and, from this ſuppoſition, it is concluded that he does not act. This is to reaſon in a circle, or rather it is not reaſoning but begging the queſtion.

Contrary motives may very properly be compared to advocates pleading the oppoſite ſides of a cauſe at the bar. It would be very weak reaſoning to ſay, that ſuch an advocate is the moſt powerful pleader, becauſe ſentence was given on his ſide. The ſentence is in the power of the judge, not of the advocate. It is equally weak reaſoning, in proof of neceſſity, to ſay, ſuch a motive prevailed, therefore it is the ſtrongeſt; ſince the defenders of liberty maintain that the determination was made by the man, and not by the motive.

We are therefore brought to this iſſue, that unleſs ſome meaſure of the ſtrength of motives can be found diſtinct from their prevalence, it cannot be determined, whether the ſtrongeſt motive always prevails or not. If ſuch a meaſure can be found and applied, we may be able to judge of the truth of this maxim, but not otherwiſe.

Every thing that can be called a motive, is addreſſed either to the animal or to the rational part of our nature. Motives of the former kind are common to us with the brutes; thoſe of the latter

latter are peculiar to rational beings. We ſhall beg leave, for diſtinction's ſake, to call the former, *animal* motives, and the latter, *rational*.

Hunger is a motive in a dog to eat; ſo is it in a man. According to the ſtrength of the appetite, it gives a ſtronger or a weaker impulſe to eat. And the ſame thing may be ſaid of every other appetite and paſſion. Such animal motives give an impulſe to the agent, to which he yields with eaſe; and, if the impulſe be ſtrong, it cannot be reſiſted without an effort which requires a greater or a leſs degree of ſelf-command. Such motives are not addreſſed to the rational powers. Their influence is immediately upon the will. We feel their influence, and judge of their ſtrength, by the conſcious effort which is neceſſary to reſiſt them.

When a man is acted upon by contrary motives of this kind, he finds it eaſy to yield to the ſtrongeſt. They are like two forces puſhing him in contrary directions. To yield to the ſtrongeſt, he needs only to be paſſive. By exerting his own force, he may reſiſt; but this requires an effort of which he is conſcious. The ſtrength of motives of this kind is perceived, not by our judgment, but by our feeling; and that is the ſtrongeſt of contrary motives, to which he can yield with eaſe, or which it requires an effort of ſelf-command to reſiſt; and this we may call the *animal teſt* of the ſtrength of motives.

If

If it be aſked, whether, in motives of this kind, the ſtrongeſt always prevails? I anſwer, That in brute-animals I believe it does. They do not appear to have any ſelf-command; an appetite or paſſion in them is overcome only by a ſtronger contrary one. On this account, they are not accountable for their actions, nor can they be the ſubjects of law.

But in men who are able to exerciſe their rational powers, and have any degree of ſelf-command, the ſtrongeſt animal motive does not always prevail. The fleſh does not always prevail againſt the ſpirit, though too often it does. And if men were neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt animal motive, they could no more be accountable, or capable of being governed by law, than brutes are.

Let us next conſider rational motives, to which the name of *motive* is more commonly and more properly given. Their influence is upon the judgment, by convincing us that ſuch an action ought to be done, that it is our duty, or conducive to our real good, or to ſome end which we have determined to purſue.

They do not give a blind impulſe to the will as animal motives do. They convince, but they do not impel, unleſs, as may often happen, they excite ſome paſſion of hope, or fear, or deſire. Such paſſions may be excited by conviction, and may operate in its aid as other animal motives do. But there may be conviction without paſ-

ſion;

ſion; and the conviction of what we ought to do, in order to ſome end which we have judged fit to be purſued, is what I call a *rational motive*.

Brutes, I think, cannot be influenced by ſuch motives. They have not the conception of *ought* and *ought not*. Children acquire theſe conceptions as their rational powers advance; and they are found in all of ripe age, who have the human faculties.

If there be any competition between rational motives, it is evident, that the ſtrongeſt, in the eye of reaſon, is that which it is moſt our duty and our real happineſs to follow. Our duty and our real happineſs are ends which are inſeparable; and they are the ends which every man, endowed with reaſon, is conſcious he ought to purſue in preference to all others. This we may call the *rational teſt* of the ſtrength of motives. A motive which is the ſtrongeſt, according to the animal teſt, may be, and very often is, the weakeſt according to the rational.

The grand and the important competition of contrary motives is between the animal, on the one hand, and the rational on the other. This is the conflict between the fleſh and the ſpirit, upon the event of which the character of men depends.

If it be aſked, which of theſe is the ſtrongeſt motive? The anſwer is, That the firſt is commonly ſtrongeſt, when they are tried by the animal teſt. If they were not ſo, human life would be

be no ſtate of trial. It would not be a warfare, nor would virtue require any effort or ſelf-command. No man would have any temptation to do wrong. But, when we try the contrary motives by the rational teſt, it is evident, that the rational motive is always the ſtrongeſt.

And now, I think, it appears, that the ſtrongeſt motive, according to either of the teſts I have mentioned, does not always prevail.

In every wiſe and virtuous action, the motive that prevails is the ſtrongeſt, according to the rational teſt, but commonly the weakeſt according to the animal. In every fooliſh, and in every vicious action, the motive that prevails is commonly the ſtrongeſt according to the animal teſt, but always the weakeſt according to the rational.

6. It is true, that we reaſon from mens motives to their actions, and, in many caſes, with great probability, but never with abſolute certainty. And to infer from this, that men are neceſſarily determined by motives, is very weak reaſoning.

For, let us ſuppoſe, for a moment, that men have moral liberty, I would aſk, what uſe may they be expected to make of this liberty? It may ſurely be expected, that, of the various actions within the ſphere of their power, they will chooſe what pleaſes them moſt for the preſent, or what appears to be moſt for their real, though diſtant good. When there is a competition between theſe motives, the fooliſh will

prefer preſent gratification; the wiſe, the greater and more diſtant good.

Now, is not this the very way in which we ſee men act? Is it not from the preſumption that they act in this way, that we reaſon from their motives to their actions? Surely it is. Is it not weak reaſoning, therefore, to argue, that men have not liberty, becauſe they act in that very way in which they would act if they had liberty? It would ſurely be more like reaſoning, to draw the contrary concluſion from the ſame premiſes.

7. Nor is it better reaſoning to conclude, that, if men are not neceſſarily determined by motives, all their actions muſt be capricious.

To reſiſt the ſtrongeſt animal motives when duty requires, is ſo far from being capricious, that it is, in the higheſt degree, wiſe and virtuous. And we hope this is often done by good men.

To act againſt rational motives, muſt always be fooliſh, vicious, or capricious. And it cannot be denied that there are too many ſuch actions done. But is it reaſonable to conclude, that becauſe liberty may be abuſed by the fooliſh and the vicious, therefore it can never be put to its proper uſe, which is to act wiſely and virtuouſly?

8. It is equally unreaſonable to conclude, That if men are not neceſſarily determined by motives, rewards and puniſhments would have

no

no effect. With wiſe men they will have their due effect; but not always with the fooliſh and the vicious.

Let us conſider what effect rewards and puniſhments do really, and in fact, produce, and what may be inferred from that effect, upon each of the oppoſite ſyſtems of liberty and of neceſſity.

I take it for granted that, in fact, the beſt and wiſeſt laws, both human and divine, are often tranſgreſſed, notwithſtanding the rewards and puniſhments that are annexed to them. If any man ſhould deny this fact, I know not how to reaſon with him.

From this fact, it may be inferred with certainty, upon the ſuppoſition of neceſſity, That, in every inſtance of tranſgreſſion, the motive of reward or puniſhment was not of ſufficient ſtrength to produce obedience to the law. This implies a fault in the lawgiver; but there can be no fault in the tranſgreſſor, who acts mechanically by the force of motives. We might as well impute a fault to the balance, when it does not raiſe a weight of two pounds by the force of one pound.

Upon the ſuppoſition of neceſſity, there can be neither reward nor puniſhment, in the proper ſenſe, as thoſe words imply good and ill deſert. Reward and puniſhment are only tools employed to produce a mechanical effect. When

the effect is not produced, the tool muſt be unfit or wrong applied.

Upon the ſuppoſition of liberty, rewards and puniſhments will have a proper effect upon the wiſe and the good; but not ſo upon the fooliſh and the vicious, when oppoſed by their animal paſſions or bad habits; and this is juſt what we ſee to be the fact. Upon this ſuppoſition, the tranſgreſſion of the law implies no defect in the law, no fault in the lawgiver; the fault is ſolely in the tranſgreſſor. And it is upon this ſuppoſition only, that there can be either reward or puniſhment, in the proper ſenſe of the words, becauſe it is only on this ſuppoſition that there can be good or ill deſert.

CHAP. V.

Liberty conſiſtent with Government.

WHEN it is ſaid that liberty would make us abſolutely ungovernable by God or man; to underſtand the ſtrength of this concluſion, it is neceſſary to know diſtinctly what is meant by *government*. There are two kinds of government, very different in their nature. The one we may, for diſtinction's ſake, call *mechanical* government, the other *moral*. The firſt is the government of beings which have no active power, but are merely paſſive and acted upon; the ſecond, of intelligent and active beings.

An

An inſtance of mechanical government may be, That of a maſter or commander of a ſhip at ſea. Suppoſing her ſkilfully built, and furniſhed with every thing proper for the deſtined voyage, to govern her properly for this purpoſe requires much art and attention: And, as every art has its rules, or laws, ſo has this. But by whom are thoſe laws to be obeyed, or thoſe rules obſerved? not by the ſhip, ſurely, for ſhe is an inactive being, but by the governor. A ſailor may ſay that ſhe does not obey the rudder; and he has a diſtinct meaning when he ſays ſo, and is perfectly underſtood. But he means not obedience in the proper, but in a metaphorical ſenſe: For, in the proper ſenſe, the ſhip can no more obey the rudder, than ſhe can give a command. Every motion, both of the ſhip and rudder, is exactly proportioned to the force impreſſed, and in the direction of that force. The ſhip never diſobeys the laws of motion, even in the metaphorical ſenſe; and they are the only laws ſhe can be ſubject to.

The ſailor, perhaps, curſes her for not obeying the rudder; but this is not the voice of reaſon, but of paſſion, like that of the loſing gameſter, when he curſes the dice. The ſhip is as innocent as the dice.

Whatever may happen during the voyage, whatever may be its iſſue, the ſhip, in the eye of reaſon, is neither an object of approbation nor of blame; becauſe ſhe does not act, but is

acted upon. If the material, in any part, be faulty; Who put it to that uſe? If the form; Who made it? If the rules of navigation were not obſerved; Who tranſgreſſed them? If a ſtorm occaſioned any diſaſter, it was no more in the power of the ſhip than of the maſter.

Another inſtance to illuſtrate the nature of mechanical government may be, That of the man who makes and exhibits a puppet-ſhow. The puppets, in all their diverting geſticulations, do not move, but are moved by an impulſe ſecretly conveyed, which they cannot reſiſt. If they do not play their parts properly, the fault is only in the maker or manager of the machinery. Too much or too little force was applied, or it was wrong directed. No reaſonable man imputes either praiſe or blame to the puppets, but ſolely to their maker or their governor.

If we ſuppoſe for a moment, the puppets to be endowed with underſtanding and will, but without any degree of active power, this will make no change in the nature of their government: For underſtanding and will, without ſome degree of active power, can produce no effect. They might, upon this ſuppoſition, be called *intelligent machines;* but they would be machines ſtill, as much ſubject to the laws of motion as inanimate matter, and therefore incapable of any other than mechanical government.

Let

Let us next conſider the nature of moral government. This is the government of perſons who have reaſon and active power, and have laws preſcribed to them for their conduct, by a legiſlator. Their obedience is obedience in the proper ſenſe; it muſt therefore be their own act and deed, and conſequently they muſt have power to obey or to diſobey. To preſcribe laws to them which they have not power to obey, or to require a ſervice beyond their power, would be tyranny and injuſtice in the higheſt degree.

When the laws are equitable, and preſcribed by juſt authority, they produce moral obligation in thoſe that are ſubject to them, and diſobedience is a crime deſerving puniſhment. But if the obedience be impoſſible; if the tranſgreſſion be neceſſary; it is ſelf-evident, that there can be no moral obligation to what is impoſſible, that there can be no crime in yielding to neceſſity, and that there can be no juſtice in puniſhing a perſon for what it was not in his power to avoid. Theſe are firſt principles in morals, and, to every unprejudiced mind, as ſelf-evident as the axioms of mathematics. The whole ſcience of morals muſt ſtand or fall with them.

Having thus explained the nature both of mechanical and of moral government, the only kinds of government I am able to conceive, it is eaſy to ſee how far liberty or neceſſity agrees with either.

On the one hand, I acknowledge that neceſſity agrees perfectly with mechanical government. This kind of government is moſt perfect when the governor is the ſole agent; every thing done is the doing of the governor only. The praiſe of every thing well done is his ſolely; and his is the blame if there be any thing ill done, becauſe he is the ſole agent.

It is true that, in common language, praiſe or diſpraiſe is often metaphorically given to the work; but, in propriety, it belongs ſolely to the author. Every workman underſtands this perfectly, and takes to himſelf very juſtly the praiſe or diſpraiſe of his own work.

On the other hand, it is no leſs evident, that, on the ſuppoſition of neceſſity in the governed, there can be no moral government. There can be neither wiſdom nor equity in preſcribing laws that cannot be obeyed. There can be no moral obligation upon beings that have no active power. There can be no crime in not doing what it was impoſſible to do; nor can there be juſtice in puniſhing ſuch omiſſion.

If we apply theſe theoretical principles to the kinds of government which do actually exiſt, whether human or divine, we ſhall find that, among men, even mechanical government is imperfect.

Men do not make the matter they work upon. Its various kinds, and the qualities belonging to each kind, are the work of GOD. The laws of nature,

nature, to which it is ſubject, are the work of GOD. The motions of the atmoſphere and of the ſea, the heat and cold of the air, the rain and wind, which are uſeful inſtruments in moſt human operations, are not in our power. So that, in all the mechanical productions of men, the work is more to be aſcribed to GOD than to man.

Civil government among men is a ſpecies of moral government, but imperfect, as its law-givers and its judges are. Human laws may be unwiſe or unjuſt; human judges may be partial or unſkilful. But in all equitable civil governments, the maxims of moral government above mentioned, are acknowledged as rules which ought never to be violated. Indeed, the rules of juſtice are ſo evident to all men, that the moſt tyrannical governments profeſs to be guided by them, and endeavour to palliate what is contrary to them by the plea of neceſſity.

That a man cannot be under an obligation to what is impoſſible; that he cannot be criminal in yielding to neceſſity, nor juſtly puniſhed for what he could not avoid, are maxims admitted, in all criminal courts, as fundamental rules of juſtice.

In oppoſition to this, it has been ſaid by ſome of the moſt able defenders of neceſſity, That human laws require no more to conſtitute a crime, but that it be voluntary; whence it is inferred, that the criminality conſiſts in the de-

termination of the will, whether that determination be free or neceſſary. This, I think indeed, is the only poſſible plea by which criminality can be made conſiſtent with neceſſity; and therefore it deſerves to be conſidered.

I acknowledge that a crime muſt be voluntary; for, if it be not voluntary, it is no deed of the man, nor can be juſtly imputed to him; but it is no leſs neceſſary that the criminal have moral liberty. In men that are adult, and of a ſound mind, this liberty is preſumed. But in every caſe where it cannot be preſumed, no criminality is imputed, even to voluntary actions.

This is evident from the following inſtances: *Firſt*, The actions of brutes appear to be voluntary; yet they are never conceived to be criminal, though they may be noxious. *Secondly*, Children in nonage act voluntarily, but they are not chargeable with crimes. *Thirdly*, Madmen have both underſtanding and will, but they have not moral liberty, and therefore are not chargeable with crimes. *Fourthly*, Even in men that are adult, and of a ſound mind, a motive that is thought irreſiſtible by any ordinary degree of ſelf-command, ſuch as the rack, or the dread of preſent death, either exculpates, or very much alleviates a voluntary action, which, in other circumſtances, would be highly criminal; whence it is evident, that if the motive were abſolutely irreſiſtible, the exculpation would be complete. So far is it from being true in itſelf,

or

or agreeable to the common ſenſe of mankind, that the criminality of an action depends ſolely upon its being voluntary.

The government of brutes, ſo far as they are ſubject to man, is a ſpecies of mechanical government, or ſomething very like to it, and has no reſemblance to moral government. As inanimate matter is governed by our knowledge of the qualities which God hath given to the various productions of nature, and our knowledge of the laws of nature which he hath eſtabliſhed; ſo brute-animals are governed by our knowledge of the natural inſtincts, appetites, affections and paſſions, which God hath given them. By a ſkilful application of theſe ſprings of their actions, they may be trained to many habits uſeful to man. After all, we find that, from cauſes unknown to us, not only ſome ſpecies, but ſome individuals of the ſame ſpecies, are more tractable than others.

Children under age are governed much in the ſame way as the moſt ſagacious brutes. The opening of their intellectual and moral powers, which may be much aided by proper inſtruction and example, is that which makes them, by degrees, capable of moral government.

Reaſon teaches us to aſcribe to the Supreme Being a government of the inanimate and inactive part of his creation, analogous to that mechanical government which men exerciſe, but infinitely more perfect. This, I think, is what we

we call GOD's *natural* government of the univerſe. In this part of the divine government, whatever is done is GOD's doing. He is the ſole cauſe, and the ſole agent, whether he act immediately, or by inſtruments ſubordinate to him; and his will is always done: For inſtruments are not cauſes, they are not agents, though we ſometimes improperly call them ſo.

It is therefore no leſs agreeable to reaſon, than to the language of holy writ, to impute to the Deity whatever is done in the natural world. When we ſay of any thing, that it is the work of Nature, this is ſaying that it is the work of GOD, and can have no other meaning.

The natural world is a grand machine, contrived, made, and governed by the wiſdom and power of the Almighty: And if there be in this natural world, beings that have life, intelligence, and will, without any degree of active power, they can only be ſubject to the ſame kind of mechanical government. Their determinations, whether we call them good or ill, muſt be the actions of the Supreme Being, as much as the productions of the earth: For, life, intelligence, and will, without active power, can do nothing, and therefore nothing can juſtly be imputed to it.

This grand machine of the natural world, diſplays the power and wiſdom of the artificer. But in it, there can be no diſplay of moral attributes, which have a relation to moral conduct in

in his creatures, ſuch as juſtice and equity in rewarding or puniſhing, the love of virtue and abhorrence of wickedneſs: For, as every thing in it is GOD's doing, there can be no vice to be puniſhed or abhorred, no virtue in his creatures to be rewarded.

According to the ſyſtem of neceſſity, the whole univerſe of creatures is this natural world; and of every thing done in it, GOD is the ſole agent. There can be no moral government, nor moral obligation. Laws, rewards, and puniſhments, are only mechanical engines, and the will of the lawgiver is obeyed as much when his laws are tranſgreſſed, as when they are obſerved. Such muſt be our notions of the government of the world, upon the ſuppoſition of neceſſity. It muſt be purely mechanical, and there can be no moral government upon that hypotheſis.

Let us conſider, on the other hand, what notion of the divine government we are naturally led into by the ſuppoſition of liberty.

They who adopt this ſyſtem conceive, that in that ſmall portion of the univerſe which falls under our view, as a great part has no active power, but moves, as it is moved, by neceſſity, and therefore muſt be ſubject to a mechanical government, ſo it has pleaſed the Almighty to beſtow upon ſome of his creatures, particularly upon man, ſome degree of active power, and of reaſon, to direct him to the right uſe of his power.

What

What connection there may be, in the nature of things, between reaſon and active power, we know not. But we ſee evidently that, as reaſon without active power can do nothing, ſo active power without reaſon has no guide to direct it to any end.

Theſe two conjoined make moral liberty, which, in how ſmall a degree ſoever it is poſſeſſed, raiſes man to a ſuperior rank in the creation of GOD. He is not merely a tool in the hand of the maſter, but a ſervant, in the proper ſenſe, who has a certain truſt, and is accountable for the diſcharge of it. Within the ſphere of his power, he has a ſubordinate dominion or government, and therefore may be ſaid to be made after the image of GOD, the Supreme Governor. But as his dominion is ſubordinate, he is under a moral obligation to make a right uſe of it, as far as the reaſon which GOD hath given him can direct him. When he does ſo, he is a juſt object of moral approbation; and no leſs an object of diſapprobation and juſt puniſhment when he abuſes the power with which he is intruſted. And he muſt finally render an account of the talent committed to him, to the Supreme Governor and righteous Judge.

This is the moral government of GOD, which, far from being inconſiſtent with liberty, ſuppoſes liberty in thoſe that are ſubject to it, and can extend no farther than that liberty extends; for accountableneſs

accountableneſs can no more agree with neceſſity than light with darkneſs.

It ought likewiſe to be obſerved, that as active power in man, and in every created being, is the gift of GOD, it depends entirely on his pleaſure for its exiſtence, its degree and its continuance, and therefore can do nothing which he does not ſee fit to permit.

Our power to act does not exempt us from being acted upon, and reſtrained or compelled by a ſuperior power; and the power of GOD is always ſuperior to that of man.

It would be great folly and preſumption in us to pretend to know all the ways in which the government of the Supreme Being is carried on, and his purpoſes accompliſhed by men, acting freely, and having different or oppoſite purpoſes in their view. For, as the heavens are high above the earth, ſo are his thoughts above our thoughts, and his ways above our ways.

That a man may have great influence upon the voluntary determinations of other men, by means of education, example and perſuaſion, is a fact which muſt be granted, whether we adopt the ſyſtem of liberty or neceſſity. How far ſuch determinations ought to be imputed to the perſon who applied thoſe means, how far to the perſon influenced by them, we know not, but GOD knows, and will judge righteouſly.

But what I would here obſerve is, That if a man of ſuperior talents may have ſo great influence

fluence over the actions of his fellow-creatures, without taking away their liberty, it is ſurely reaſonable to allow a much greater influence of the ſame kind to him who made man. Nor can it ever be proved, that the wiſdom and power of the Almighty are inſufficient for governing free agents, ſo as to anſwer his purpoſes.

He who made man may have ways of governing his determinations, conſiſtent with moral liberty, of which we have no conception. And he who gave this liberty freely, may lay any reſtraint upon it that is neceſſary for anſwering his wiſe and benevolent purpoſes. The juſtice of his government requires, that his creatures ſhould be accountable only for what they have received, and not for what was never intruſted to them. And we are ſure that the Judge of all the earth will do what is right.

Thus, I think, it appears, that, upon the ſuppoſition of neceſſity, there can be no moral government of the univerſe. Its government muſt be perfectly mechanical, and every thing done in it, whether good or ill, muſt be GOD's doing; and that, upon the ſuppoſition of liberty, there may be a perfect moral government of the univerſe, conſiſtent with his accompliſhing all his purpoſes, in its creation and government.

The arguments to prove that man is endowed with moral liberty, which have the greateſt weight with me, are three: *Firſt*, Becauſe he has a natural conviction or belief, that, in many caſes,

caſes, he acts freely; *ſecondly*, Becauſe he is accountable; and, *thirdly*, Becauſe he is able to proſecute an end by a long ſeries of means adapted to it.

CHAP. VI.

Firſt Argument.

WE have, by our conſtitution, a natural conviction or belief that we act freely: A conviction ſo early, ſo univerſal and ſo neceſſary in moſt of our rational operations, that it muſt be the reſult of our conſtitution, and the work of him that made us.

Some of the moſt ſtrenuous advocates for the doctrine of neceſſity acknowledge, that it is impoſſible to act upon it. They ſay that we have a natural ſenſe or conviction that we act freely, but that this is a fallacious ſenſe.

This doctrine is diſhonourable to our Maker, and lays a foundation for univerſal ſcepticiſm. It ſuppoſes the Author of our being to have given us one faculty on purpoſe to deceive us, and another by which we may detect the fallacy, and find that he impoſed upon us.

If any one of our natural faculties be fallacious, there can be no reaſon to truſt to any of them; for he that made one made all.

The genuine dictate of our natural faculties is the voice of GOD, no leſs than what he reveals from

from heaven; and to ſay that it is fallacious is to impute a lie to the GOD of truth.

If candour and veracity be not an eſſential part of moral excellence, there is no ſuch thing as moral excellence, nor any reaſon to rely on the declarations and promiſes of the Almighty. A man may be tempted to lie, but not without being conſcious of guilt and of meanneſs. Shall we impute to the Almighty what we cannot impute to a man without a heinous affront?

Paſſing this opinion, therefore, as ſhocking to an ingenuous mind, and, in its conſequences, ſubverſive of all religion, all morals and all knowledge, let us proceed to conſider the evidence of our having a natural conviction that we have ſome degree of active power.

The very conception or idea of active power muſt be derived from ſomething in our own conſtitution. It is impoſſible to account for it otherwiſe. We ſee events, but we ſee not the power that produces them. We perceive one event to follow another, but we perceive not the chain that binds them together. The notion of power and cauſation, therefore, cannot be got from external objects.

Yet the notion of cauſes, and the belief that every event muſt have a cauſe which had power to produce it, is found in every human mind ſo firmly eſtabliſhed, that it cannot be rooted out.

This notion and this belief muſt have its origin from ſomething in our conſtitution; and that

that it is natural to man, appears from the following obſervations.

1. We are conſcious of many voluntary exertions, ſome eaſy, others more difficult, ſome requiring a great effort. Theſe are exertions of power. And though a man may be unconſcious of his power when he does not exert it, he muſt have both the conception and the belief of it, when he knowingly and willingly exerts it, with intention to produce ſome effect.

2. Deliberation about an action of moment, whether we ſhall do it or not, implies a conviction that it is in our power. To deliberate about an end, we muſt be convinced that the means are in our power; and to deliberate about the means, we muſt be convinced that we have power to chooſe the moſt proper.

3. Suppoſe our deliberation brought to an iſſue, and that we reſolve to do what appeared proper, Can we form ſuch a reſolution or purpoſe, without any conviction of power to execute it? No; it is impoſſible. A man cannot reſolve to lay out a ſum of money, which he neither has, nor hopes ever to have.

4. Again, when I plight my faith in any promiſe or contract, I muſt believe that I ſhall have power to perform what I promiſe. Without this perſuaſion, a promiſe would be downright fraud.

There is a condition implied in every promiſe, *if we live*, and *if* GOD *continue with us the power*

which he hath given us. Our conviction, therefore, of this power derogates not in the leaſt from our dependence upon GOD. The rudeſt ſavage is taught by nature to admit this condition in all promiſes, whether it be expreſſed or not. For it is a dictate of common ſenſe, that we can be under no obligation to do what it is impoſſible for us to do.

If we act upon the ſyſtem of neceſſity, there muſt be another condition implied in all deliberation, in every reſolution, and in every promiſe; and that is, *if we ſhall be willing.* But the will not being in our power, we cannot engage for it.

If this condition be underſtood, as it muſt be underſtood if we act upon the ſyſtem of neceſſity, there can be no deliberation or reſolution, nor any obligation in a promiſe. A man might as well deliberate, reſolve and promiſe, upon the actions of other men as upon his own.

It is no leſs evident, that we have a conviction of power in other men, when we adviſe, or perſuade, or command, or conceive them to be under obligation by their promiſes.

5. Is it poſſible for any man to blame himſelf for yielding to neceſſity? Then he may blame himſelf for dying, or for being a man. Blame ſuppoſes a wrong uſe of power; and when a man does as well as it was poſſible for him to do, wherein is he to be blamed? Therefore all conviction of wrong conduct, all remorſe and ſelf-condemnation,

condemnation, imply a conviction of our power to have done better. Take away this conviction, and there may be a ſenſe of miſery, or a dread of evil to come, but there can be no ſenſe of guilt, or reſolution to do better.

Many who hold the doctrine of neceſſity, diſown theſe conſequences of it, and think to evade them. To ſuch they ought not to be imputed; but their inſeparable connection with that doctrine appears ſelf-evident: And therefore ſome late patrons of it have had the boldneſs to avow them. "They cannot accuſe themſelves of having done any thing wrong in the ultimate "ſenſe of the words. In a ſtrict ſenſe, they have "nothing to do with repentance, confeſſion and "pardon, theſe being adapted to a fallacious "view of things."

Thoſe who can adopt theſe ſentiments, may indeed celebrate, with high encomiums, *the great and glorious doctrine of neceſſity*. It reſtores them, in their own conceit, to the ſtate of innocence. It delivers them from all the pangs of guilt and remorſe, and from all fear about their future conduct, though not about their fate. They may be as ſecure that they ſhall do nothing wrong, as thoſe who have finiſhed their courſe. A doctrine ſo flattering to the mind of a ſinner, is very apt to give ſtrength to weak arguments.

After all, it is acknowledged by thoſe who boaſt of this glorious doctrine, "That every

" man, let him uſe what efforts he can, will ne-
" ceſſarily feel the ſentiments of ſhame, remorſe,
" and repentance, and, oppreſſed with a ſenſe of
" guilt, will have recourſe to that mercy of
" which he ſtands in need."

The meaning of this ſeems to me to be, That although the doctrine of neceſſity be ſupported by invincible arguments, and though it be the moſt conſolatory doctrine in the world; yet no man, in his moſt ſerious moments, when he fiſts himſelf before the throne of his Maker, can poſſibly believe it, but muſt then neceſſarily lay aſide this glorious doctrine, and all its flattering conſequences, and return to the humiliating conviction of his having made a bad uſe of the power which GOD had given him.

If the belief of our having active power be neceſſarily implied in thoſe rational operations we have mentioned, it muſt be coeval with our reaſon; it muſt be as univerſal among men, and as neceſſary in the conduct of life, as thoſe operations are.

We cannot recollect by memory when it began. It cannot be a prejudice of education, or of falſe philoſophy. It muſt be a part of our conſtitution, or the neceſſary reſult of our conſtitution, and therefore the work of GOD.

It reſembles, in this reſpect, our belief of the exiſtence of a material world; our belief that thoſe we converſe with are living and intelligent beings; our belief that thoſe things did really happen

happen which we diſtinctly remember, and our belief that we continue the ſame identical perſons.

We find difficulty in accounting for our belief of theſe things; and ſome Philoſophers think, that they have diſcovered good reaſons for throwing it off. But it ſticks faſt, and the greateſt ſceptic finds, that he muſt yield to it in his practice, while he wages war with it in ſpeculation.

If it be objected to this argument, That the belief of our acting freely cannot be implied in the operations we have mentioned, becauſe thoſe operations are performed by them who believe that we are, in all our actions, governed by neceſſity. The anſwer to this objection is, That men in their practice may be governed by a belief which in ſpeculation they reject.

However ſtrange and unaccountable this may appear, there are many well known inſtances of it.

I knew a man who was as much convinced as any man of the folly of the popular belief of apparitions in the dark, yet he could not ſleep in a room alone, nor go alone into a room in the dark. Can it be ſaid, that his fear did not imply a belief of danger? This is impoſſible. Yet his philoſophy convinced him, that he was in no more danger in the dark when alone, than with company.

Here an unreaſonable belief, which was merely a prejudice of the nurſery, ſtuck ſo faſt as to govern his conduct, in oppoſition to his ſpeculative belief as a Philoſpher and a man of ſenſe.

There are few perſons who can look down from the battlement of a very high tower without fear, while their reaſon convinces them that they are in no more danger than when ſtanding upon the ground.

There have been perſons who profeſſed to believe that there is no diſtinction between virtue and vice, yet in their practice they reſented injuries, and eſteemed noble and virtuous actions.

There have been ſceptics who profeſſed to diſbelieve their ſenſes, and every human faculty; but no ſceptic was ever known, who did not, in practice, pay a regard to his ſenſes and to his other faculties.

There are ſome points of belief ſo neceſſary, that, without them, a man would not be the being which GOD made him. Theſe may be oppoſed in ſpeculation, but it is impoſſible to root them out. In a ſpeculative hour they ſeem to vaniſh, but in practice they reſume their authority. This ſeems to be the caſe of thoſe who hold the doctrine of neceſſity, and yet act as if they were free.

This natural conviction of ſome degree of power in ourſelves and in other men, reſpects voluntary actions only. For as all our power is directed by our will, we can form no conception of

of power, properly ſo called, that is not under the direction of will. And therefore our exertions, our deliberations, our purpoſes, our promiſes, are only in things that depend upon our will. Our advices, exhortations, and commands, are only in things that depend upon the will of thoſe to whom they are addreſſed. We impute no guilt to ourſelves, nor to others, in things where the will is not concerned.

But it deſerves our notice, that we do not conceive every thing, without exception, to be in a man's power which depends upon his will. There are many exceptions to this general rule. The moſt obvious of theſe I ſhall mention, becauſe they both ſerve to illuſtrate the rule, and are of importance in the queſtion concerning the liberty of man.

In the rage of madneſs, men are abſolutely deprived of the power of ſelf-government. They act voluntarily, but their will is driven as by a tempeſt, which, in lucid intervals, they reſolve to oppoſe with all their might, but are overcome when the fit of madneſs returns.

Idiots are like men walking in the dark, who cannot be ſaid to have the power of chooſing their way, becauſe they cannot diſtinguiſh the good road from the bad. Having no light in their underſtanding, they muſt either ſit ſtill, or be carried on by ſome blind impulſe.

Between the darkneſs of infancy, which is equal to that of idiots, and the maturity of rea-

ſon, there is a long twilight, which, by inſenſible degrees, advances to the perfect day.

In this period of life, man has but little of the power of ſelf-government. His actions, by nature, as well as by the laws of ſociety, are in the power of others more than in his own. His folly and indiſcretion, his levity and inconſtancy, are conſidered as the fault of youth, rather than of the man. We conſider him as half a man and half a child, and expect that each by turns ſhould play its part. He would be thought a ſevere and unequitable cenſor of manners, who required the ſame cool deliberation, the ſame ſteady conduct, and the ſame maſtery over himſelf in a boy of thirteen, as in a man of thirty.

It is an old adage, That violent anger is a ſhort fit of madneſs. If this be literally true in any caſe, a man, in ſuch a fit of paſſion, cannot be ſaid to have the command of himſelf. If real madneſs could be proved, it muſt have the effect of madneſs while it laſts, whether it be for an hour or for life. But the madneſs of a ſhort fit of paſſion, if it be really madneſs, is incapable of proof; and therefore is not admitted in human tribunals as an exculpation. And, I believe, there is no caſe where a man can ſatisfy his own mind that his paſſion, both in its beginning and in its progreſs, was irreſiſtible. The Searcher of hearts alone knows infallibly what allowance is due in caſes of this kind.

But

But a violent paſſion, though it may not be irreſiſtible, is difficult to be reſiſted: And a man, ſurely, has not the ſame power over himſelf in paſſion, as when he is cool. On this account it is allowed by all men to alleviate, when it cannot exculpate; and has its weight in criminal courts, as well as in private judgment.

It ought likewiſe to be obſerved, That he who has accuſtomed himſelf to reſtrain his paſſions, enlarges by habit his power over them, and conſequently over himſelf. When we conſider that a Canadian ſavage can acquire the power of defying death, in its moſt dreadful forms, and of braving the moſt exquiſite torment for many long hours, without loſing the command of himſelf; we may learn from this, that, in the conſtitution of human nature, there is ample ſcope for the enlargement of that power of ſelf-command, without which there can be no virtue nor magnanimity.

There are caſes, however, in which a man's voluntary actions are thought to be very little, if at all, in his power, on account of the violence of the motive that impels him. The magnanimity of a hero, or of a martyr, is not expected in every man, and on all occaſions.

If a man truſted by the government with a ſecret, which it is high treaſon to diſcloſe, be prevailed upon by a bribe, we have no mercy for him, and hardly allow the greateſt bribe to be any alleviation of his crime.

But,

But, on the other hand, if the ſecret be extorted by the rack, or by the dread of preſent death, we pity him more than we blame him, and would think it ſevere and unequitable to condemn him as a traitor.

What is the reaſon that all men agree in condemning this man as a traitor in the firſt caſe, and in the laſt, either exculpate him, or think his fault greatly alleviated? If he acted neceſſarily in both caſes, compelled by an irreſiſtible motive, I can ſee no reaſon why we ſhould not paſs the ſame judgment on both.

But the reaſon of theſe different judgments is evidently this, That the love of money, and of what is called a man's intereſt, is a cool motive, which leaves to a man the entire power over himſelf: But the torment of the rack, or the dread of preſent death, are ſo violent motives, that men, who have not uncommon ſtrength of mind, are not maſters of themſelves in ſuch a ſituation, and therefore what they do is not imputed, or is thought leſs criminal.

If a man reſiſt ſuch motives, we admire his fortitude, and think his conduct heroical rather than human. If he yields, we impute it to human frailty, and think him rather to be pitied than ſeverely cenſured.

Inveterate habits are acknowledged to diminiſh very conſiderably the power a man has over himſelf. Although we may think him highly blameable in acquiring them, yet, when they are

are confirmed to a certain degree, we conſider him as no longer maſter of himſelf, and hardly reclaimable without a miracle.

Thus we ſee, that the power which we are led, by common ſenſe, to aſcribe to man, reſpects his voluntary actions only, and that it has various limitations even with regard to them. Some actions that depend upon our will are eaſy, others very difficult, and ſome, perhaps, beyond our power. In different men, the power of ſelf-government is different, and in the ſame man at different times. It may be diminiſhed, or perhaps loſt, by bad habits; it may be greatly increaſed by good habits.

Theſe are facts atteſted by experience, and ſupported by the common judgment of mankind. Upon the ſyſtem of liberty, they are perfectly intelligible; but, I think, irreconcileable to that of neceſſity; for, How can there be an eaſy and a difficult in actions equally ſubject to neceſſity? or, How can power be greater or leſs, increaſed or diminiſhed, in thoſe who have no power?

This natural conviction of our acting freely, which is acknowledged by many who hold the doctrine of neceſſity, ought to throw the whole burden of proof upon that ſide: For, by this, the ſide of liberty has what lawyers call a *jus quæſitum*, or a right of ancient poſſeſſion, which ought to ſtand good till it be overturned. If it cannot be proved that we always act from neceſſity,

ceſſity, there is no need of arguments on the other ſide, to convince us that we are free agents.

To illuſtrate this by a ſimilar caſe: If a Philoſopher would perſuade me, that my fellow-men with whom I converſe, are not thinking intelligent beings, but mere machines, though I might be at a loſs to find arguments againſt this ſtrange opinion, I ſhould think it reaſonable to hold the belief which nature gave me before I was capable of weighing evidence, until convincing proof is brought againſt it.

CHAP. VII.

Second Argument.

THAT there is a real and eſſential diſtinction between right and wrong conduct, between juſt and unjuſt; that the moſt perfect moral rectitude is to be aſcribed to the Deity; that man is a moral and accountable being, capable of acting right and wrong, and anſwerable for his conduct to him who made him, and aſſigned him a part to act upon the ſtage of life; are principles proclaimed by every man's conſcience; principles upon which the ſyſtems of morality and natural religion, as well as the ſyſtem of revelation, are grounded, and which have been generally acknowledged by thoſe who hold contrary opinions on the ſubject of human liberty.

ty. I ſhall therefore here take them for granted.

Theſe principles afford an obvious, and, I think, an invincible argument, that man is endowed with moral liberty.

Two things are implied in the notion of a moral and accountable being; underſtanding and active power.

Firſt, He muſt underſtand the law to which he is bound, and his obligation to obey it. Moral obedience muſt be voluntary, and muſt regard the authority of the law. I may command my horſe to eat when he hungers, and drink when he thirſts. He does ſo; but his doing it is no moral obedience. He does not underſtand my command, and therefore can have no will to obey it. He has not the conception of moral obligation, and therefore cannot act from the conviction of it. In eating and drinking, he is moved by his own appetite only, and not by my authority.

Brute-animals are incapable of moral obligation, becauſe they have not that degree of underſtanding which it implies. They have not the conception of a rule of conduct, and of obligation to obey it, and therefore, though they may be noxious, they cannot be criminal.

Man, by his rational nature, is capable both of underſtanding the law that is preſcribed to him, and of perceiving its obligation. He knows what it is to be juſt and honeſt, to injure no man,

man, and to obey his Maker. From his conſtitution, he has an immediate conviction of his obligation to theſe things. He has the approbation of his conſcience when he acts by theſe rules; and he is conſcious of guilt and demerit when he tranſgreſſes them. And, without this knowledge of his duty and his obligation, he would not be a moral and accountable being.

Secondly, Another thing implied in the notion of a moral and accountable being, is power to do what he is accountable for.

That no man can be under a moral obligation to do what it is impoſſible for him to do, or to forbear what it is impoſſible for him to forbear, is an axiom as ſelf-evident as any in mathematics. It cannot be contradicted, without overturning all notion of moral obligation; nor can there be any exception to it, when it is rightly underſtood.

Some moraliſts have mentioned what they conceive to be an exception to this maxim. The exception is this. When a man, by his own fault, has diſabled himſelf from doing his duty, his obligation, they ſay, remains, though he is now unable to diſcharge it. Thus, if a man by ſumptuous living has become bankrupt, his inability to pay his debt does not take away his obligation.

To judge whether, in this and ſimilar caſes, there be any exception to the axiom above mentioned, they muſt be ſtated accurately.

No

No doubt a man is highly criminal in living above his fortune, and his crime is greatly aggravated by the circumſtance of his being thereby unable to pay his juſt debt. Let as ſuppoſe, therefore, that he is puniſhed for this crime as much as it deſerves; that his goods are fairly diſtributed among his creditors, and that one half remains unpaid: Let us ſuppoſe alſo, that he adds no new crime to what is paſt, that he becomes a new man, and not only ſupports himſelf by honeſt induſtry, but does all in his power to pay what he ſtill owes.

I would now aſk, Is he further puniſhable, and really guilty for not paying more than he is able? Let every man conſult his conſcience, and ſay whether he can blame this man for not doing more than he is able to do. His guilt before his bankruptcy is out of the queſtion, as he has received the puniſhment due for it. But that his ſubſequent conduct is unblameable, every man muſt allow; and that, in his preſent ſtate, he is accountable for no more than he is able to do. His obligation is not cancelled, it returns with his ability, and can go no farther.

Suppoſe a ſailor, employed in the navy of his country, and longing for the eaſe of a public hoſpital as an invalid, to cut off his fingers, ſo as to diſable him from doing the duty of a ſailor; he is guilty of a great crime; but, after he has been puniſhed according to the demerit of his crime, will his captain inſiſt that he ſhall ſtill do the

the duty of a ſailor? Will he command him to go aloft when it is impoſſible for him to do it, and puniſh him as guilty of diſobedience? Surely if there be any ſuch thing as juſtice and injuſtice, this would be unjuſt and wanton cruelty.

Suppoſe a ſervant, through negligence and inattention, miſtakes the orders given him by his maſter, and, from this miſtake, does what he was ordered not to do. It is commonly ſaid that culpable ignorance does not excuſe a fault: This deciſion is inaccurate, becauſe it does not ſhew where the fault lies: The fault was ſolely in that inattention, or negligence, which was the occaſion of his miſtake: There was no ſubſequent fault.

This becomes evident, when we vary the caſe ſo far as to ſuppoſe, that he was unavoidably led into the miſtake without any fault on his part. His miſtake is now invincible, and, in the opinion of all moraliſts, takes away all blame; yet this new caſe ſuppoſes no change, but in the cauſe of his miſtake. His ſubſequent conduct was the ſame in both caſes. The fault therefore lay ſolely in the negligence and inattention which was the cauſe of his miſtake.

The axiom, That invincible ignorance takes away all blame, is only a particular caſe of the general axiom, That there can be no moral obligation to what is impoſſible; the former is grounded upon the latter, and can have no other foundation.

I ſhall put only one caſe more. Suppoſe that a man, by exceſs and intemperance, has entirely deſtroyed his rational faculties, ſo as to have become perfectly mad or idiotical; ſuppoſe him forewarned of his danger, and that, though he foreſaw that this muſt be the conſequence, he went on ſtill in his criminal indulgence. A greater crime can hardly be ſuppoſed, or more deſerving of ſevere puniſhment? Suppoſe him puniſhed as he deſerves; will it be ſaid, that the duty of a man is incumbent upon him now, when he has not the faculties of a man, or that he incurs new guilt when he is not a moral agent? Surely we may as well ſuppoſe a plant, or a clod of earth, to be a ſubject of moral duty.

The deciſions I have given of theſe caſes, are grounded upon the fundamental principles of morals, the moſt immediate dictates of conſcience. If theſe principles are given up, all moral reaſoning is at an end, and no diſtinction is left between what is juſt and what is unjuſt. And it is evident, that none of theſe caſes furniſhes any exception to the axiom above mentioned. No moral obligation can be conſiſtent with impoſſibility in the performance.

Active power, therefore, is neceſſarily implied in the very notion of a moral accountable being. And if man be ſuch a being, he muſt have a degree of active power proportioned to the account he is to make. He may have a model of perfection ſet before him which he is unable to

reach; but, if he does to the utmoſt of his power, this is all he can be anſwerable for. To incur guilt, by not going beyond his power, is impoſſible.

What was ſaid, in the firſt argument, of the limitation of our power, adds much ſtrength to the preſent argument. A man's power, it was obſerved, extends only to his voluntary actions, and has many limitations, even with reſpect to them.

His accountableneſs has the ſame extent and the ſame limitations.

In the rage of madneſs he has no power over himſelf, neither is he accountable, or capable of moral obligation. In ripe age man is accountable in a greater degree than in non-age, becauſe his power over himſelf is greater. Violent paſſions, and violent motives alleviate what is done through their influence, in the ſame proportion as they diminiſh the power of reſiſtance.

There is, therefore, a perfect correſpondence between power, on the one hand, and moral obligation and accountableneſs, on the other. They not only correſpond in general, as they reſpect voluntary actions only, but every limitation of the firſt produces a correſponding limitation of the two laſt. This, indeed, amounts to nothing more than that maxim of common ſenſe, confirmed by Divine authority, That to whom much is given, of him much will be required.

The

The ſum of this argument is, That a certain degree of active power is the talent which GOD hath given to every rational accountable creature, and of which he will require an account. If man had no power, he would have nothing to account for. All wiſe and all fooliſh conduct, all virtue and vice, conſiſt in the right uſe or in the abuſe of that power which GOD hath given us. If man had no power, he could neither be wiſe nor fooliſh, virtuous nor vicious.

If we adopt the ſyſtem of neceſſity, the terms *moral obligation* and *accountableneſs*, *praiſe* and *blame*, *merit* and *demerit*, *juſtice* and *injuſtice*, *reward* and *puniſhment*, *wiſdom* and *folly*, *virtue* and *vice*, ought to be diſuſed, or to have new meanings given to them when they are uſed in religion, in morals, or in civil government; for upon that ſyſtem, there can be no ſuch things as they have been always uſed to ſignify.

CHAP. VIII.

Third Argument.

THAT man has power over his own actions and volitions appears, becauſe he is capable of carrying on, wiſely and prudently, a ſyſtem of conduct, which he has before conceived in his mind, and reſolved to proſecute.

I take it for granted, that, among the various characters of men, there have been ſome, who,

after they came to years of underſtanding, deliberately laid down a plan of conduct, which they reſolved to purſue through life; and that of theſe, ſome have ſteadily purſued the end they had in view, by the proper means.

It is of no conſequence in this argument, whether one has made the beſt choice of his main end or not; whether his end be riches, or power, or fame, or the approbation of his Maker. I ſuppoſe only, that he has prudently and ſteadily purſued it; that, in a long courſe of deliberate actions, he has taken the means that appeared moſt conducive to his end, and avoided whatever might croſs it.

That ſuch conduct in a man demonſtrates a certain degree of wiſdom and underſtanding, no man ever doubted; and, I ſay, it demonſtrates, with equal force, a certain degree of power over his voluntary determinations.

This will appear evident, if we conſider, that underſtanding without power may project, but can execute nothing. A regular plan of conduct, as it cannot be contrived without underſtanding, ſo it cannot be carried into execution without power; and, therefore, the execution, as an effect, demonſtrates, with equal force, both power and underſtanding in the cauſe. Every indication of wiſdom, taken from the effect, is equally an indication of power to execute what wiſdom planned. And, if we have any evidence, that the wiſdom which formed the plan is in the man,

man, we have the very ſame evidence, that the power which executed it is in him alſo.

In this argument, we reaſon from the ſame principles, as in demonſtrating the being and perfections of the Firſt Cauſe of all things.

The effects we obſerve in the courſe of nature require a cauſe. Effects wiſely adapted to an end, require a wiſe cauſe. Every indication of the wiſdom of the Creator is equally an indication of his power. His wiſdom appears only in the works done by his power; for wiſdom without power may ſpeculate, but it cannot act; it may plan, but it cannot execute its plans.

The ſame reaſoning we apply to the works of men. In a ſtately palace we ſee the wiſdom of the architect. His wiſdom contrived it, and wiſdom could do no more. The execution required, both a diſtinct conception of the plan, and power to operate according to that plan.

Let us apply theſe principles to the ſuppoſition we have made, That a man, in a long courſe of conduct, has determined and acted prudently in the proſecution of a certain end. If the man had both the wiſdom to plan this courſe of conduct, and that power over his own actions that was neceſſary to carry it into execution, he is a free agent, and uſed his liberty, in this inſtance, with underſtanding.

But if all his particular determinations, which concurred in the execution of this plan, were produced, not by himſelf, but by ſome cauſe

acting neceſſarily upon him, then there is no evidence left that he contrived this plan, or that he ever ſpent a thought about it.

The cauſe that directed all theſe determinations ſo wiſely, whatever it was, muſt be a wiſe and intelligent cauſe; it muſt have underſtood the plan, and have intended the execution of it.

If it be ſaid, that all this courſe of determinations was produced by motives; motives ſurely have not underſtanding to conceive a plan, and intend its execution. We muſt therefore go back beyond motives to ſome intelligent being who had the power of arranging thoſe motives, and applying them, in their proper order and ſeaſon, ſo as to bring about the end.

This intelligent being muſt have underſtood the plan, and intended to execute it. If this be ſo, as the man had no hand in the execution, we have not any evidence left, that he had any hand in the contrivance, or even that he is a thinking being.

If we can believe, that an extenſive ſeries of means may conſpire to promote an end without a cauſe that intended the end, and had power to chooſe and apply thoſe means for the purpoſe, we may as well believe, that this world was made by a fortuitous concourſe of atoms, without an intelligent and powerful cauſe.

If a lucky concourſe of motives could produce the conduct of an ALEXANDER or a JULIUS CÆSAR, no reaſon can be given why a lucky concourſe

courſe of atoms might not produce the planetary ſyſtem.

If, therefore, wiſe conduct in a man demonſtrates that he has ſome degree of wiſdom, it demonſtrates, with equal force and evidence, that he has ſome degree of power over his own determinations.

All the reaſon we can aſſign for believing that our fellow-men think and reaſon, is grounded upon their actions and ſpeeches. If they are not the cauſe of theſe, there is no reaſon left to conclude that they think and reaſon.

Des Cartes thought that the human body is merely a mechanical engine, and that all its motions and actions are produced by mechaniſm. If ſuch a machine could be made to ſpeak and to act rationally, we might indeed conclude with certainty, that the maker of it had both reaſon and active power; but if we once knew, that all the motions of the machine were purely mechanical, we ſhould have no reaſon to conclude that the man had reaſon or thought.

The concluſion of this argument is, That, if the actions and ſpeeches of other men give us ſufficient evidence that they are reaſonable beings, they give us the ſame evidence, and the ſame degree of evidence, that they are free agents.

There is another concluſion that may be drawn from this reaſoning, which it is proper to mention.

Suppoſe a fataliſt, rather than give up the ſcheme of neceſſity, ſhould acknowledge that he has no evidence that there is thought and reaſon in any of his fellow-men, and that they may be mechanical engines for all that he knows; he will be forced to acknowledge, that there muſt be active power, as well as underſtanding, in the maker of thoſe engines, and that the Firſt Cauſe is a free agent. We have the ſame reaſon to believe this, as to believe his exiſtence and his wiſdom. And, if the Deity acts freely, every argument brought to prove that freedom of action is impoſſible, muſt fall to the ground.

The Firſt Cauſe gives us evidence of his power by every effect that gives us evidence of his wiſdom. And, if he is pleaſed to communicate to the work of his hands ſome degree of his wiſdom, no reaſon can be aſſigned why he may not communicate ſome degree of his power, as the talent which wiſdom is to employ.

That the firſt motion, or the firſt effect, whatever it be, cannot be produced neceſſarily, and, conſequently, that the Firſt Cauſe muſt be a free agent, has been demonſtrated ſo clearly and unanſwerably by Dr CLARKE, both in his Demonſtration of the Being and Attributes of GOD, and in the end of his Remarks on COLLIN'S Philoſophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty, that I can add nothing to what he has ſaid; nor have I found any objection made to his reaſoning, by any of the defenders of neceſſity.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of Arguments for Neceſſity.

SOME of the arguments that have been offered for neceſſity were already conſidered in this Eſſay.

It has been ſaid, That human liberty reſpects only the actions that are ſubſequent to volition; and that power over the determinations of the will is inconceivable, and involves a contradiction. This argument was conſidered in the firſt chapter.

It has been ſaid, That liberty is inconſiſtent with the influence of motives, that it would make human actions capricious, and man ungovernable by GOD or man. Theſe arguments were conſidered in the fourth and fifth chapters.

I am now to make ſome remarks upon other arguments that have been urged in this cauſe. They may, I think, be reduced to three claſſes. They are intended to prove, either that liberty of determination is impoſſible, or that it would be hurtful, or that, in fact, man has no ſuch liberty.

To prove that liberty of determination is impoſſible, it has been ſaid, That there muſt be a ſufficient reaſon for every thing. *For every exiſtence,*

iſtence, for every event, for every truth, there muſt be a ſufficient reaſon.

The famous German Philoſopher LEIBNITZ boaſted much of having firſt applied this principle to philoſophy, and of having, by that means, changed metaphyſics from being a play of unmeaning words, to be a rational and demonſtrative ſcience. On this account it deſerves to be conſidered.

A very obvious objection to this principle was, That two or more means may be equally fit for the ſame end; and that, in ſuch a caſe, there may be a ſufficient reaſon for taking one of the number, though there be no reaſon for preferring one to another, of means equally fit.

To obviate this objection, LEIBNITZ maintained, that the caſe ſuppoſed could not happen; or, if it did, that none of the means could be uſed, for want of a ſufficient reaſon to prefer one to the reſt. Therefore he determined, with ſome of the ſchoolmen, That if an aſs could be placed between two bundles of hay, or two fields of graſs, equally inviting, the poor beaſt would certainly ſtand ſtill and ſtarve; but the caſe, he ſays, could not happen without a miracle.

When it was objected to this principle, That there could be no reaſon but the will of GOD why the material world was placed in one part of unlimited ſpace rather than another, or created at one point of unlimited duration rather than

than another, or why the planets ſhould move from weſt to eaſt, rather than in a contrary direction; theſe objections LEIBNITZ obviated by maintaining, That there is no ſuch thing as unoccupied ſpace or duration; that ſpace is nothing but the order of things co-exiſting, and duration is nothing but the order of things ſucceſſive; that all motion is relative, ſo that if there were only one body in the univerſe, it would be immoveable; that it is inconſiſtent with the perfection of the Deity, that there ſhould be any part of ſpace unoccupied by body; and, I ſuppoſe, he underſtood the ſame of every part of duration. So that, according to this ſyſtem, the world, like its Author, muſt be infinite, eternal, and immoveable; or, at leaſt, as great in extent and duration as it is poſſible for it to be.

When it was objected to the principle of a ſufficient reaſon, That of two particles of matter perfectly ſimilar, there can be no reaſon but the will of GOD for placing *this* here and *that* there; this objection LEIBNITZ obviated by maintaining, That it is impoſſible that there can be two particles of matter, or any two things, perfectly ſimilar. And this ſeems to have led him to another of his grand principles, which he calls, *The identity of indiſcernibles.*

When the principle of a ſufficient reaſon had produced ſo many ſurpriſing diſcoveries in philoſophy, it is no wonder that it ſhould determine the

the long diſputed queſtion about human liberty. This it does in a moment. The determination of the will is an event for which there muſt be a ſufficient reaſon, that is, ſomething previous, which was neceſſarily followed by that determination, and could not be followed by any other determination; therefore it was neceſſary.

Thus we ſee, that this principle of the neceſſity of a ſufficient reaſon for every thing, is very fruitful of conſequences; and by its fruits we may judge of it. Thoſe who will adopt it, muſt adopt all the conſequences that hang upon it. To fix them all beyond diſpute, no more is neceſſary but to prove the truth of the principle on which they depend.

I know of no argument offered by LEIBNITZ in proof of this principle, but the authority of ARCHIMEDES, who, he ſays, makes uſe of it to prove, that a balance loaded with equal weights on both ends will continue at reſt.

I grant it to be good reaſoning with regard to a balance, or with regard to any machine, That, when there is no external cauſe of its motion, it muſt remain at reſt, becauſe the machine has no power of moving itſelf. But to apply this reaſoning to a man, is to take for granted that the man is a machine, which is the very point in queſtion.

LEIBNITZ, and his followers, would have us to take this principle of the neceſſity of a ſufficient reaſon for every exiſtence, for every event, for

for every truth, as a firſt principle, without proof, without explanation; though it be evidently a vague propoſition, capable of various meanings, as the word *reaſon* is. It muſt have different meanings when applied to things of ſo different nature as an event and a truth; and it may have different meanings when applied to the ſame thing. We cannot therefore form a diſtinct judgment of it in the groſs, but only by taking it to pieces, and applying it to different things, in a preciſe and diſtinct meaning.

It can have no connection with the diſpute about liberty, except when it is applied to the determinations of the will. Let us therefore ſuppoſe a voluntary action of a man; and that the queſtion is put, Whether was there a ſufficient reaſon for this action or not?

The natural and obvious meaning of this queſtion is, Was there a motive to the action ſufficient to juſtify it to be wiſe and good, or, at leaſt, innocent? Surely, in this ſenſe, there is not a ſufficient reaſon for every human action, becauſe there are many that are fooliſh, unreaſonable and unjuſtifiable.

If the meaning of the queſtion be, Was there a cauſe of the action? Undoubtedly there was: Of every event there muſt be a cauſe, that had power ſufficient to produce it, and that exerted that power for the purpoſe. In the preſent caſe, either the man was the cauſe of the action, and then it was a free action, and is juſtly imputed to

to him; or it muſt have had another cauſe, and cannot juſtly be imputed to the man. In this ſenſe, therefore, it is granted that there was a ſufficient reaſon for the action; but the queſtion about liberty is not in the leaſt affected by this conceſſion.

If, again, the meaning of the queſtion be, Was there ſomething previous to the action, which made it to be neceſſarily produced? Every man, who believes that the action was free, will anſwer to this queſtion in the negative.

I know no other meaning that can be put upon the principle of a ſufficient reaſon, when applied to the determinations of the human will, beſides the three I have mentioned. In the firſt, it is evidently falſe; in the ſecond, it is true, but does not affect the queſtion about liberty; in the third, it is a mere aſſertion of neceſſity without proof.

Before we leave this boaſted principle, we may ſee how it applies to events of another kind. When we ſay that a Philoſopher has aſſigned a ſufficient reaſon for ſuch a phænomenon, What is the meaning of this? The meaning ſurely is, That he has accounted for it from the known laws of nature. The ſufficient reaſon of a phænomenon of nature muſt therefore be ſome law or laws of nature, of which the phænomenon is a neceſſary conſequence. But are we ſure that, in this ſenſe, there is a ſufficient

cient reaſon for every phænomenon of nature? I think we are not.

For, not to ſpeak of miraculous events, in which the laws of nature are ſuſpended, or counteracted, we know not but that, in the ordinary courſe of GOD's providence, there may be particular acts of his adminiſtration, that do not come under any general law of nature.

Eſtabliſhed laws of nature are neceſſary for enabling intelligent creatures to conduct their affairs with wiſdom and prudence, and proſecute their ends by proper means; but ſtill it may be fit, that ſome particular events ſhould not be fixed by general laws, but be directed by particular acts of the Divine government, that ſo his reaſonable creatures may have ſufficient inducement to ſupplicate his aid, his protection and direction, and to depend upon him for the ſucceſs of their honeſt deſigns.

We ſee that, in human governments, even thoſe that are moſt legal, it is impoſſible that every act of the adminiſtration ſhould be directed by eſtabliſhed laws. Some things muſt be left to the direction of the executive power, and particularly acts of clemency and bounty to petitioning ſubjects. That there is nothing analogous to this in the Divine government of the world, no man is able to prove.

We have no authority to pray that GOD would counteract or ſuſpend the laws of nature in our behalf. Prayer, therefore, ſuppoſes that he may lend

lend an ear to our prayers, without tranſgreſſing the laws of nature. Some have thought, that the only uſe of prayer and devotion is, to produce a proper temper and diſpoſition in ourſelves, and that it has no efficacy with the Deity. But this is a hypotheſis without proof. It contradicts our moſt natural ſentiments, as well as the plain doctrine of Scripture, and tends to damp the fervour of every act of devotion.

It was indeed an article of the ſyſtem of LEIBNITZ, That the Deity, ſince the creation of the world, never did any thing, excepting in the caſe of miracles; his work being made ſo perfect at firſt, as never to need his interpoſition. But, in this, he was oppoſed by Sir ISAAC NEWTON, and others of the ableſt Philoſophers, nor was he ever able to give any proof of this tenet.

There is no evidence, therefore, that there is a ſufficient reaſon for every natural event; if, by a ſufficient reaſon, we underſtand ſome fixed law or laws of nature, of which that event is a neceſſary conſequence.

But what, ſhall we ſay, is the ſufficient reaſon for a truth? For our belief of a truth, I think, the ſufficient reaſon is our having good evidence; but what may be meant by a ſufficient reaſon for its being a truth, I am not able to gueſs, unleſs the ſufficient reaſon of a contingent truth be, That it *is* true; and, of a neceſſary truth, that it *muſt be* true. This makes a man little wiſer.

From

From what has been ſaid, I think it appears, That this principle of the neceſſity of a ſufficient reaſon for every thing, is very indefinite in its ſignification. If it mean, That of every event there muſt be a cauſe that had ſufficient power to produce it, this is true, and has always been admitted as a firſt principle in Philoſophy, and in common life. If it mean that every event muſt be neceſſarily conſequent upon ſomething (called a ſufficient reaſon) that went before it; this is a direct aſſertion of univerſal fatality, and has many ſtrange, not to ſay abſurd, conſequences: But, in this ſenſe, it is neither ſelf-evident, nor has any proof of it been offered. And, in general, in every ſenſe in which it has evidence, it gives no new information; and, in every ſenſe in which it would give new information, it wants evidence.

Another argument that has been uſed to prove liberty of action to be impoſſible is, That it implies "an effect without a cauſe."

To this it may be briefly anſwered, That a free action is an effect produced by a being who had power and will to produce it; therefore it is not an effect without a cauſe.

To ſuppoſe any other cauſe neceſſary to the production of an effect, than a being who had the power and the will to produce it, is a contradiction; for it is to ſuppoſe that being to have power to produce the effect, and not to have power to produce it.

But as great ſtreſs is laid upon this argument by a late zealous advocate for neceſſity, we ſhall conſider the light in which he puts it.

He introduces this argument with an obſervation to which I entirely agree: It is, That to eſtabliſh this doctrine of neceſſity, nothing is neceſſary but that, throughout all nature, the ſame conſequences ſhould invariably reſult from the ſame circumſtances.

I know nothing more that can be deſired to eſtabliſh univerſal fatality throughout the univerſe. When it is proved that, through all nature, the ſame conſequences invariably reſult from the ſame circumſtances, the doctrine of liberty muſt be given up.

To prevent all ambiguity, I grant, that, in reaſoning, the ſame conſequences, throughout all nature, will invariably follow from the ſame premiſes: Becauſe good reaſoning muſt be good reaſoning in all times and places. But this has nothing to do with the doctrine of neceſſity. The thing to be proved, therefore, in order to eſtabliſh that doctrine, is, That, through all nature, the ſame events invariably reſult from the ſame circumſtances.

Of this capital point, the proof offered by that author is, That an event not preceded by any circumſtances that determined it to be what it was, would be *an effect without a cauſe*. Why ſo? "For, ſays he, a *cauſe* cannot be defined to "be any thing but *ſuch previous circumſtances as*

"*are*

" *are conſtantly followed by a certain effect*; the " conſtancy of the reſult making us conclude, " that there muſt be a *ſufficient reaſon*, in the na- " ture of things, why it ſhould be produced in " thoſe circumſtances."

I acknowledge that, if this be the only definition that can be given of a cauſe, it will follow, That an event not preceded by circumſtances that determined it to be what it was, would be, not an *effect* without a cauſe, which is a contradiction in terms, but an *event* without a cauſe, which I hold to be impoſſible. The matter therefore is brought to this iſſue, Whether this be the only definition that can be given of a cauſe?

With regard to this point, we may obſerve, *firſt*, That this definition of a cauſe, bating the phraſeology of putting a *cauſe* under the category of *circumſtances*, which I take to be new, is the ſame, in other words, with that which Mr HUME gave, of which he ought to be acknowledged the inventor. For I know of no author before Mr HUME, who maintained, that we have no other notion of a cauſe, but that it is ſomething prior to the effect, which has been found by experience to be conſtantly followed by the effect. This is a main pillar of his ſyſtem; and he has drawn very important conſequences from this definition, which I am far from thinking this author will adopt.

Without repeating what I have before ſaid of cauſes in the firſt of theſe Eſſays, and in the ſecond and third chapters of this, I ſhall here mention ſome of the conſequences that may be juſtly deduced from this definition of a cauſe, that we may judge of it by its fruits.

Firſt, It follows from this definition of a cauſe, that night is the cauſe of day, and day the cauſe of night. For no two things have more conſtantly followed each other ſince the beginning of the world.

Secondly, It follows from this definition of a cauſe, that, for what we know, any thing may be the cauſe of any thing, ſince nothing is eſſential to a cauſe but its being conſtantly followed by the effect. If this be ſo, what is unintelligent may be the cauſe of what is intelligent; folly may be the cauſe of wiſdom, and evil of good; all reaſoning from the nature of the effect to the nature of the cauſe, and all reaſoning from final cauſes, muſt be given up as fallacious.

Thirdly, From this definition of a cauſe, it follows, that we have no reaſon to conclude, that every event muſt have a cauſe: For innumerable events happen, when it cannot be ſhewn that there were certain previous circumſtances that have conſtantly been followed by ſuch an event. And though it were certain, that every event we have had acceſs to obſerve had a cauſe, it would not follow, that every event muſt have a cauſe: For it is contrary to the rules of logic to conclude,

clude, that, becauſe a thing has always been, therefore it muſt be; to reaſon from what is contingent, to what is neceſſary.

Fourthly, From this definition of a cauſe, it would follow, that we have no reaſon to conclude that there was any cauſe of the creation of this world: For there were no previous circumſtances that had been conſtantly followed by ſuch an effect. And, for the ſame reaſon, it would follow from the definition, that whatever was ſingular in its nature, or the firſt thing of its kind, could have no cauſe.

Several of theſe conſequences were fondly embraced by Mr HUME, as neceſſarily following from his definition of a cauſe, and as favourable to his ſyſtem of abſolute ſcepticiſm. Thoſe who adopt the definition of a cauſe, from which they follow, may chooſe whether they will adopt its conſequences, or ſhew that they do not follow from the definition.

A *ſecond* obſervation with regard to this argument is, That a definition of a cauſe may be given, which is not burdened with ſuch untoward conſequences.

Why may not an efficient cauſe be defined to be a being that had power and will to produce the effect? The production of an effect requires active power, and active power, being a quality, muſt be in a being endowed with that power. Power without will produces no effect; but,

where theſe are conjoined, the effect muſt be produced.

This, I think, is the proper meaning of the word *cauſe*, when it is uſed in metaphyſics; and particularly when we affirm, that every thing that begins to exiſt muſt have a cauſe; and when, by reaſoning, we prove, that there muſt be an eternal Firſt Cauſe of all things.

Was the world produced by previous circumſtances which are conſtantly followed by ſuch an effect? or, Was it produced by a Being that had power to produce it, and willed its production?

In natural philoſophy, the word *cauſe* is often uſed in a very different ſenſe. When an event is produced according to a known law of nature, the law of nature is called the cauſe of that event. But a law of nature is not the efficient cauſe of any event. It is only the rule, according to which the efficient cauſe acts. A law is a thing conceived in the mind of a rational being, not a thing that has a real exiſtence; and, therefore, like a motive, it can neither act nor be acted upon, and conſequently cannot be an efficient cauſe. If there be no being that acts according to the law, it produces no effect.

This author takes it for granted, that every voluntary action of man was determined to be what it was by the laws of nature, in the ſame ſenſe as mechanical motions are determined by the laws of motion; and that every choice, not thus determined, "is juſt as impoſſible, as that a "mechanical

" mechanical motion ſhould depend upon no " certain law or rule, or that any other effect " ſhould exiſt without a cauſe."

It ought here to be obſerved, that there are two kinds of laws, both very properly called *laws of nature*, which ought not to be confounded. There are moral laws of nature, and phyſical laws of nature. The firſt are the rules which GOD has preſcribed to his rational creatures for their conduct. They reſpect voluntary and free actions only; for no other actions can be ſubject to moral rules. Theſe laws of nature ought to be always obeyed, but they are often tranſgreſſed by men. There is therefore no impoſſibility in the violation of the moral laws of nature, nor is ſuch a violation an effect without a cauſe. The tranſgreſſor is the cauſe, and is juſtly accountable for it.

The phyſical laws of nature are the rules according to which the Deity commonly acts in his natural government of the world; and, whatever is done according to them, is not done by man, but by GOD, either immediately, or by inſtruments under his direction. Theſe laws of nature neither reſtrain the power of the Author of nature, nor bring him under any obligation to do nothing beyond their ſphere. He has ſometimes acted contrary to them, in the caſe of miracles, and perhaps often acts without regard to them, in the ordinary courſe of his providence. Neither miraculous events, which are

contrary to the phyſical laws of nature, nor ſuch ordinary acts of the Divine adminiſtration as are without their ſphere, are impoſſible, nor are they *effects without a cauſe*. GOD is the cauſe of them, and to him only they are to be imputed.

That the moral laws of nature are often tranſgreſſed by man, is undeniable. If the phyſical laws of nature make his obedience to the moral laws to be impoſſible, then he is, in the literal ſenſe, *born under one law, bound unto another*, which contradicts every notion of a righteous government of the world.

But though this ſuppoſition were attended with no ſuch ſhocking conſequence, it is merely a ſuppoſition; and until it be proved that every choice or voluntary action of man is determined by the phyſical laws of nature, this argument for neceſſity is only the taking for granted the point to be proved.

Of the ſame kind is the argument for the impoſſibility of liberty, taken from a balance, which cannot move but as it is moved by the weights put into it. This argument, though urged by almoſt every writer in defence of neceſſity, is ſo pitiful, and has been ſo often anſwered, that it ſcarce deſerves to be mentioned.

Every argument in a diſpute, which is not grounded on principles granted by both parties, is that kind of ſophiſm which logicians call *petitio principii*; and ſuch, in my apprehenſion, are all

all the arguments offered to prove that liberty of action is impoſſible.

It may farther be obſerved, that every argument of this claſs, if it were really concluſive, muſt extend to the Deity, as well as to all created beings; and neceſſary exiſtence, which has always been conſidered as the prerogative of the Supreme Being, muſt belong equally to every creature and to every event, even the moſt trifling.

This I take to be the ſyſtem of SPINOSA, and of thoſe among the ancients who carried fatality to the higheſt pitch.

I before referred the reader to Dr CLARKE's argument, which profeſſes to demonſtrate, that the Firſt Cauſe is a free agent. Until that argument ſhall be ſhewn to be fallacious, a thing which I have not ſeen attempted, ſuch weak arguments as have been brought to prove the contrary, ought to have little weight.

CHAP. X.

The ſame ſubject.

WITH regard to the *ſecond* claſs of arguments for neceſſity, which are intended to prove, that liberty of action would be hurtful to man, I have only to obſerve, that it is a fact too evident to be denied, whether we adopt the ſyſtem of liberty or that of neceſſity, that men actually

actually receive hurt from their own voluntary actions, and from the voluntary actions of other men; nor can it be pretended, that this fact is inconſiſtent with the doctrine of liberty, or that it is more unaccountable upon this ſyſtem than upon that of neceſſity.

In order, therefore, to draw any ſolid argument againſt liberty, from its hurtfulneſs, it ought to be proved, That, if man were a free agent, he would do more hurt to himſelf, or to others, than he actually does.

To this purpoſe it has been ſaid, That liberty would make men's actions capricious; that it would deſtroy the influence of motives; that it would take away the effect of rewards and puniſhments; and that it would make man abſolutely ungovernable.

Theſe arguments have been already conſidered in the fourth and fifth chapters of this Eſſay; and, therefore, I ſhall now proceed to the *third* claſs of arguments for neceſſity, which are intended to prove, that, in fact, men are not free agents.

The moſt formidable argument of this claſs, and, I think, the only one that has not been conſidered in ſome of the preceding chapters, is taken from the preſcience of the Deity.

GOD foreſees every determination of the human mind. It muſt therefore be what he foreſees it ſhall be; and therefore muſt be neceſſary.

This

This argument may be underſtood three different ways, each of which we ſhall conſider, that we may ſee all its force.

The neceſſity of the event may be thought to be a juſt conſequence, either barely from its being certainly future, or barely from its being foreſeen, or from the impoſſibility of its being foreſeen, if it was not neceſſary.

Firſt, It may be thought, that, as nothing can be known to be future which is not certainly future; ſo, if it be certainly future, it muſt be neceſſary.

This opinion has no leſs authority in its favour than that of ARISTOTLE, who indeed held the doctrine of liberty, but believing, at the ſame time, that whatever is certainly future muſt be neceſſary; in order to defend the liberty of human actions, maintained, That contingent events have no certain futurity; but I know of no modern advocate for liberty, who has put the defence of it upon that iſſue.

It muſt be granted, that as whatever was, certainly was, and whatever is, certainly is, ſo whatever ſhall be, certainly ſhall be. Theſe are identical propoſitions, and cannot be doubted by thoſe who conceive them diſtinctly.

But I know no rule of reaſoning by which it can be inferred, that, becauſe an event certainly ſhall be, therefore its production muſt be neceſſary. The manner of its production, whether free or neceſſary, cannot be concluded from the time

time of its production, whether it be paſt, preſent or future. That it ſhall be, no more implies that it ſhall be neceſſarily, than that it ſhall be freely produced; for neither preſent, paſt, nor future, have any more connection with neceſſity than they have with freedom.

I grant, therefore, that, from events being foreſeen, it may be juſtly concluded, that they are certainly future; but from their being certainly future, it does not follow that they are neceſſary.

Secondly, If it be meant by this argument, that an event muſt be neceſſary, merely becauſe it is foreſeen, neither is this a juſt conſequence: For it has often been obſerved, That preſcience and knowledge of every kind, being an immanent act, has no effect upon the thing known. Its mode of exiſtence, whether it be free or neceſſary, is not in the leaſt affected by its being known to be future, any more than by its being known to be paſt or preſent. The Deity foreſees his own future free actions, but neither his foreſight nor his purpoſe makes them neceſſary. The argument, therefore, taken in this view, as well as in the former, is inconcluſive.

A *third* way in which this argument may be underſtood, is this: It is impoſſible that an event which is not neceſſary ſhould be foreſeen; therefore every event that is certainly foreſeen, muſt be neceſſary. Here the concluſion certainly follows from the antecedent propoſition, and therefore

fore the whole ſtreſs of the argument lies upon the proof of that propoſition.

Let us conſider, therefore, whether it can be proved, That no free action can be certainly foreſeen. If this can be proved, it will follow, either that all actions are neceſſary, or that all actions cannot be foreſeen.

With regard to the general propoſition, That it is impoſſible that any free action can be certainly foreſeen, I obſerve,

Firſt, That every man who believes the Deity to be a free agent, muſt believe that this propoſition not only is incapable of proof, but that it is certainly falſe: For the man himſelf foreſees, that the Judge of all the earth will always do what is right, and that he will fulfil whatever he has promiſed; and at the ſame time, believes, that, in doing what is right, and in fulfilling his promiſes, the Deity acts with the moſt perfect freedom.

Secondly, I obſerve, That every man who believes that it is an abſurdity or contradiction, that any free action ſhould be certainly foreſeen, muſt believe, if he will be conſiſtent, either that the Deity is not a free agent, or that he does not foreſee his own actions; nor can we foreſee that he will do what is right, and will fulfil his promiſes.

Thirdly, Without conſidering the conſequences which this general propoſition carries in its boſom,

boſom, which give it a very bad aſpect, let us attend to the arguments offered to prove it.

Dr PRIESTLY has laboured more in the proof of this propoſition than any other author I am acquainted with, and maintains it to be, not only a difficulty and a myſtery, as it has been called, that a contingent event ſhould be the object of knowledge, but that, in reality, there cannot be a greater abſurdity or contradiction. Let us hear the proof of this.

" For, ſays he, as certainly as nothing can be " known to exiſt, but what does exiſt, ſo cer- " tainly can nothing be known to *ariſe from* " *what does exiſt*, but what does ariſe from it or " depend upon it. But, according to the defi- " nition of the terms, a contingent event does " not depend upon any previous known circum- " ſtances, ſince ſome other event might have " ariſen in the ſame circumſtances."

This argument, when ſtripped of incidental and explanatory clauſes, and affected variations of expreſſion, amounts to this: Nothing can be known to ariſe from what does exiſt, but what does ariſe from it: But a contingent event does not ariſe from what does exiſt. The concluſion, which is left to be drawn by the reader, muſt, according to the rules of reaſoning, be: Therefore a contingent event cannot be known to ariſe from what does exiſt.

It is here very obvious, that a thing may ariſe from what does exiſt, two ways, freely or neceſſarily.

ceſſarily. A contingent event ariſes from its cauſe, not neceſſarily but freely, and ſo, that another event might have ariſen from the ſame cauſe, in the ſame circumſtances.

The ſecond propoſition of the argument is, That a contingent event does not depend upon any previous known circumſtances, which I take to be only a variation of the term of *not ariſing from what does exiſt*. Therefore, in order to make the two propoſitions to correſpond, we muſt underſtand by *ariſing from what does exiſt*, ariſing neceſſarily from what does exiſt. When this ambiguity is removed, the argument ſtands thus: Nothing can be known to ariſe neceſſarily from what does exiſt, but what does neceſſarily ariſe from it: But a contingent event does not ariſe neceſſarily from what does exiſt; therefore a contingent event cannot be known to ariſe neceſſarily from what does exiſt.

I grant the whole; but the concluſion of this argument is not what he undertook to prove, and therefore the argument is that kind of ſophiſm which logicians call *ignorantia elenchi*.

The thing to be proved is not, That a contingent event cannot be known to ariſe neceſſarily from what exiſts; but that a contingent future event cannot be the object of knowledge.

To draw the argument to this concluſion, it muſt be put thus: Nothing can be known to ariſe from what does exiſt, but what ariſes neceſſarily from it: But a contingent event does not

not ariſe neceſſarily from what does exiſt; therefore a contingent event cannot be known to ariſe from what does exiſt.

The concluſion here is what it ought to be; but the firſt propoſition aſſumes the thing to be proved, and therefore the argument is what logicians call *petitio principii*.

To the ſame purpoſe he ſays, "That nothing "can be known at preſent, except itſelf or its "neceſſary cauſe exiſt at preſent."

This is affirmed, but I find no proof of it.

Again he ſays, "That knowledge ſuppoſes an "object, which, in this caſe, does not exiſt." It is true that knowledge ſuppoſes an object, and every thing that is known is an object of knowledge, whether paſt, preſent, or future, whether contingent or neceſſary.

Upon the whole, the arguments I can find upon this point, bear no proportion to the confidence of the aſſertion, that there cannot be a greater abſurdity or contradiction, than that a contingent event ſhould be the object of knowledge.

To thoſe who, without pretending to ſhew a manifeſt abſurdity or contradiction in the knowledge of future contingent events, are ſtill of opinion, that it is impoſſible that the future free actions of man, a being of imperfect wiſdom and virtue, ſhould be certainly foreknown, I would humbly offer the following conſiderations.

1. I grant that there is no knowledge of this kind in man; and this is the cauſe that we find it ſo difficult to conceive it in any other being.

All our knowledge of future events is drawn either from their neceſſary connection with the preſent courſe of nature, or from their connection with the character of the agent that produces them. Our knowledge, even of thoſe future events that neceſſarily reſult from the eſtabliſhed laws of nature, is hypothetical. It ſuppoſes the continuance of thoſe laws with which they are connected. And how long thoſe laws may be continued, we have no certain knowledge. GOD only knows when the preſent courſe of nature ſhall be changed, and therefore he only has certain knowledge even of events of this kind.

The character of perfect wiſdom and perfect rectitude in the Deity, gives us certain knowledge that he will always be true in all his declarations, faithful in all his promiſes, and juſt in all his diſpenſations. But when we reaſon from the character of men to their future actions, though, in many caſes, we have ſuch probability as we reſt upon in our moſt important worldly concerns, yet we have no certainty, becauſe men are imperfect in wiſdom and in virtue. If we had even the moſt perfect knowledge of the character and ſituation of a man, this would not be ſufficient to give certainty to our knowledge of his future actions; becauſe, in ſome

actions, both good and bad men deviate from their general character.

The preſcience of the Deity, therefore, muſt be different not only in degree, but in kind, from any knowledge we can attain of futurity.

2. Though we can have no conception how the future free actions of men may be known by the Deity, this is not a ſufficient reaſon to conclude that they cannot be known. Do we know, or can we conceive, how GOD knows the ſecrets of mens hearts? Can we conceive how GOD made this world without any pre-exiſtent matter? All the ancient Philoſophers believed this to be impoſſible: And for what reaſon but this, that they could not conceive how it could be done. Can we give any better reaſon for believing that the actions of men cannot be certainly foreſeen?

3. Can we conceive how we ourſelves have certain knowledge by thoſe faculties with which GOD has endowed us? If any man thinks that he underſtands diſtinctly how he is conſcious of his own thoughts; how he perceives external objects by his ſenſes; how he remembers paſt events, I am afraid that he is not yet ſo wiſe as to underſtand his own ignorance.

4. There ſeems to me to be a great analogy between the preſcience of future contingents, and the memory of paſt contingents. We poſſeſs the laſt in ſome degree, and therefore find no difficulty in believing that it may be perfect

in

in the Deity. But the firſt we have in no degree, and therefore are apt to think it impoſſible.

In both, the object of knowledge is neither what preſently exiſts, nor has any neceſſary connection with what preſently exiſts. Every argument brought to prove the impoſſibility of preſcience, proves, with equal force, the impoſſibility of memory. If it be true that nothing can be known to ariſe from what does exiſt, but what neceſſarily ariſes from it, it muſt be equally true, that nothing can be known to have gone before what does exiſt, but what muſt neceſſarily have gone before it. If it be true that nothing future can be known unleſs its neceſſary cauſe exiſt at preſent, it muſt be equally true that nothing paſt can be known unleſs ſomething conſequent, with which it is neceſſarily connected, exiſt at preſent. If the fataliſt ſhould ſay, That paſt events are indeed neceſſarily connected with the preſent, he will not ſurely venture to ſay, that it is by tracing this neceſſary connection, that we remember the paſt.

Why then ſhould we think preſcience impoſſible in the Almighty, when he has given us a faculty which bears a ſtrong analogy to it, and which is no leſs unaccountable to the human underſtanding, than preſcience is. It is more reaſonable, as well as more agreeable to the ſacred writings, to conclude with a pious father of the church, " Quocirca nullo modo cogimur, aut re-
" tentâ præſcientiâ DEI tollere voluntatis arbi-

" trium, aut retento voluntatis arbitrio, DEUM, " quod nefas eſt, negare præſcium futurorum: " Sed utrumque amplectimur, utrumque fideli- " ter et veraciter confitemur: Illud ut bene cre- " damus; hoc ut bene vivamus." AUG.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Permiſſion of Evil.

ANOTHER uſe has been made of Divine preſcience by the advocates for neceſſity, which it is proper to conſider before we leave this ſubject.

It has been ſaid, " That all thoſe conſequen- " ces follow from the Divine preſcience which " are thought moſt alarming in the ſcheme of ne- " ceſſity; and particularly GOD's being the pro- " per cauſe of moral evil. For, to ſuppoſe GOD " to foreſee and permit what it was in his power " to have prevented, is the very ſame thing, as " to ſuppoſe him to will, and directly to cauſe it. " He diſtinctly foreſees all the actions of a man's " life, and all the conſequences of them: If, " therefore, he did not think any particular man " and his conduct proper for his plan of crea- " tion and providence, he certainly would not " have introduced him into being at all."

In this reaſoning we may obſerve, that a ſuppoſition is made which ſeems to contradict itſelf. That

That all the actions of a particular man ſhould be diſtinctly foreſeen, and, at the ſame time, that that man ſhould never be brought into exiſtence, ſeems to me to be a contradiction: And the ſame contradiction there is, in ſuppoſing any action to be diſtinctly foreſeen, and yet prevented. For, if it be foreſeen, it ſhall happen; and, if it be prevented, it ſhall not happen, and therefore could not be foreſeen.

The knowledge here ſuppoſed is neither preſcience nor ſcience, but ſomething very different from both. It is a kind of knowledge, which ſome metaphyſical divines, in their controverſies about the order of the Divine decrees, a ſubject far beyond the limits of human underſtanding, attributed to the Deity, and of which other divines denied the poſſibility, while they firmly maintained the Divine preſcience.

It was called *ſcientia media*, to diſtinguiſh it from preſcience; and by this *ſcientia media* was meant, not the knowing from eternity all things that ſhall exiſt, which is preſcience, nor the knowing all the connections and relations of things that exiſt or may be conceived, which is ſcience, but a knowledge of things contingent, that never did nor ſhall exiſt. For inſtance, the knowing every action that would be done by a man who is barely conceived, and ſhall never be brought into exiſtence.

Againſt the poſſibility of the *ſcientia media* arguments may be urged, which cannot be applied

to preſcience. Thus it may be ſaid, that no thing can be known but what is true. It is true that the future actions of a free agent ſhall exiſt, and therefore we ſee no impoſſibility in its being known that they ſhall exiſt: But with regard to the free actions of an agent that never did nor ſhall exiſt, there is nothing true, and therefore nothing can be known. To ſay that the being conceived, would certainly act in ſuch a way, if placed in ſuch a ſituation, if it have any meaning, is to ſay, That his acting in that way is the conſequence of the conception; but this contradicts the ſuppoſition of its being a free action.

Things merely conceived have no relations or connections but ſuch as are implied in the conception, or are conſequent from it. Thus I conceive two circles in the ſame plane. If this be all I conceive, it is not true that theſe circles are equal or unequal, becauſe neither of theſe relations is implied in the conception; yet if the two circles really exiſted, they muſt be either equal or unequal. Again, I conceive two circles in the ſame plane, the diſtance of whoſe centres is equal to the ſum of their ſemidiameters. It is true of theſe circles, that they will touch one another, becauſe this follows from the conception; but it is not true that they will be equal or unequal, becauſe neither of theſe relations is implied in the conception, nor is conſequent from it.

In like manner, I can conceive a being who has power to do an indifferent action, or not to do it. It is not true that he would do it, nor is it true that he would not do it, becauſe neither is implied in my conception, nor follows from it; and what is not true cannot be known.

Though I do not perceive any fallacy in this argument againſt a *ſcientia media*, I am ſenſible how apt we are to err in applying what belongs to our conceptions and our knowledge, to the conceptions and knowlędge of the Supreme Being; and, therefore, without pretending to determine for or againſt a *ſcientia media*, I only obſerve, that, to ſuppoſe that the Deity prevents what he foreſees by his preſcience, is a contradiction, and that to know that a contingent event which he ſees fit not to permit would certainly happen if permitted, is not preſcience, but the *ſcientia media*, whoſe exiſtence or poſſibility we are under no neceſſity of admitting.

Waving all diſpute about *ſcientia media*, we acknowledge, that nothing can happen under the adminiſtration of the Deity, which he does not ſee fit to permit. The permiſſion of natural and moral evil, is a phenomenon which cannot be diſputed. To account for this phenomenon under the government of a Being of infinite goodneſs, juſtice, wiſdom and power, has, in all ages, been conſidered as difficult to human reaſon, whether we embrace the ſyſtem of liberty or that of neceſſity. But, if the difficulty of ac-

counting for this phenomenon upon the ſyſtem of neceſſity, be as great as it is upon the ſyſtem of liberty, it can have no weight when uſed as an argument againſt liberty.

The defenders of neceſſity, to reconcile it to the principles of Theiſm, find themſelves obliged to give up all the moral attributes of GOD, excepting that of goodneſs, or a deſire to produce happineſs. This they hold to be the ſole motive of his making and governing the univerſe. Juſtice, veracity, faithfulneſs, are only modifications of goodneſs, the means of promoting its purpoſes, and are exerciſed only ſo far as they ſerve that end. Virtue is acceptable to him, and vice diſpleaſing, only as the firſt tends to produce happineſs and the laſt miſery. He is the proper cauſe and agent of all moral evil as well as good; but it is for a good end, to produce the greater happineſs to his creatures. He does evil that good may come, and this end ſanctifies the worſt actions that contribute to it. All the wickedneſs of men being the work of GOD, he muſt, when he ſurveys it, pronounce it, as well as all his other works, to be very good.

This view of the Divine nature, the only one conſiſtent with the ſcheme of neceſſity, appears to me much more ſhocking than the permiſſion of evil upon the ſcheme of liberty. It is ſaid, that it requires only *ſtrength of mind* to embrace it: To me it ſeems to require much ſtrength of countenance to profeſs it.

In

In this ſyſtem, as in CLEANTHES' Tablature of the Epicurean ſyſtem, pleaſure or happineſs is placed upon the throne as the queen, to whom all the virtues bear the humble office of menial ſervants.

As the end of the Deity, in all his actions, is not his own good, which can receive no addition, but the good of his creatures; and, as his creatures are capable of this diſpoſition in ſome degree, is he not pleaſed with this image of himſelf in his creatures, and diſpleaſed with the contrary? Why then ſhould he be the author of malice, envy, revenge, tyranny and oppreſſion, in their hearts? Other vices that have no malevolence in them may pleaſe ſuch a Deity, but ſurely malevolence cannot pleaſe him.

If we form our notions of the moral attributes of the Deity from what we ſee of his government of the world, from the dictates of reaſon and conſcience, or from the doctrine of revelation; juſtice, veracity, faithfulneſs, the love of virtue and diſlike of vice, appear to be no leſs eſſential attributes of his nature and goodneſs.

In man, who is made after the image of GOD, goodneſs or benevolence is indeed an eſſential part of virtue, but it is not the whole.

I am at a loſs what arguments can be brought to prove goodneſs to be eſſential to the Deity, which will not, with equal force, prove other moral attributes to be ſo; or what objections can be brought againſt the latter, which have not equal

equal ſtrength againſt the former, unleſs it be admitted to be an objection againſt other moral attributes, that they do not accord with the doctrine of neceſſity.

If other moral evils may be attributed to the Deity as the means of promoting general good, why may not falſe declarations and falſe promiſes? And then what ground have we left to believe the truth of what he reveals, or to rely upon what he promiſes?

Suppoſing this ſtrange view of the Divine nature were to be adopted in favour of the doctrine of neceſſity, there is ſtill a great difficulty to be reſolved.

Since it is ſuppoſed, that the Supreme Being had no other end in making and governing the univerſe, but to produce the greateſt degree of happineſs to his creatures in general, how comes it to paſs, that there is ſo much miſery in a ſyſtem made and governed by infinite wiſdom and power for a contrary purpoſe?

The ſolution of this difficulty leads us neceſſarily to another hypotheſis, That all the miſery and vice that is in the world is a neceſſary ingredient in that ſyſtem which produces the greateſt ſum of happineſs upon the whole. This connection betwixt the greateſt ſum of happineſs and all the miſery that is in the univerſe, muſt be fatal and neceſſary in the nature of things, ſo that even Almighty power cannot break it: For benevolence

benevolence can never lead to inflict miſery without neceſſity.

This neceſſary connection between the greateſt ſum of happineſs upon the whole, and all the natural and moral evil that is, or has been, or ſhall be, being once eſtabliſhed, it is impoſſible for mortal eyes to diſcern how far this evil may extend, or on whom it may happen to fall; whether this fatal connection may be temporary or eternal, or what proportion of the happineſs may be balanced by it.

A world made by perfect wiſdom and Almighty power, for no other end but to make it happy, preſents the moſt pleaſing proſpect that can be imagined. We expect nothing but uninterrupted happineſs to prevail for ever. But, alas! when we conſider that in this happieſt ſyſtem, there muſt be neceſſarily all the miſery and vice we ſee, and how much more we know not, how is the proſpect darkened!

Theſe two hypotheſes, the one limiting the moral character of the Deity, the other limiting his power, ſeem to me to be the neceſſary conſequences of neceſſity, when it is joined with Theiſm; and they have accordingly been adopted by the ableſt defenders of that doctrine.

If ſome defenders of liberty, by limiting too raſhly the Divine preſcience, in order to defend that ſyſtem, have raiſed high indignation in their opponents; have they not equal ground of indignation againſt thoſe, who, to defend neceſſity, limit

limit the moral perfection of the Deity, and his Almighty power?

Let us conſider, on the other hand, what conſequences may be fairly drawn from GOD's permitting the abuſe of liberty in agents on whom he has beſtowed it.

If it be aſked, Why does GOD permit ſo much ſin in his creation? I confeſs I cannot anſwer the queſtion, but muſt lay my hand upon my mouth. He giveth no account of his conduct to the children of men. It is our part to obey his commands, and not to ſay unto him, Why doſt thou thus?

Hypotheſes might be framed; but, while we have ground to be ſatisfied, that he does nothing but what is right, it is more becoming us to acknowledge that the ends and reaſons of his univerſal government are beyond our knowledge, and perhaps beyond the comprehenſion of human underſtanding. We cannot penetrate ſo far into the counſel of the Almighty, as to know all the reaſons why it became him, of whom are all things, and to whom are all things, to create, not only machines, which are ſolely moved by his hand, but ſervants and children, who, by obeying his commands, and imitating his moral perfections, might riſe to a high degree of glory and happineſs in his favour, or, by perverſe diſobedience, might incur guilt and juſt puniſhment. In this he appears to us awful in his juſtice, as well as amiable in his goodneſs.

But,

But, as he diſdains not to appeal to men for the equity of his proceedings towards them when his character is impeached, we may, with humble reverence, plead for GOD, and vindicate that moral excellence which is the glory of his nature, and of which the image is the glory and the perfection of man.

Let us obſerve firſt of all, that *to permit* hath two meanings. It ſignifies not to forbid; and it ſignifies not to hinder by ſuperior power. In the firſt of theſe ſenſes, GOD never permits ſin. His law forbids every moral evil. By his laws and by his government, he gives every encouragement to good conduct, and every diſcouragement to bad. But he does not always, by his ſuperior power, hinder it from being committed. This is the ground of the accuſation; and this, it is ſaid, is the very ſame thing as directly to will and to cauſe it.

As this is aſſerted without proof, and is far from being ſelf-evident, it might be ſufficient to deny it until it be proved. But, without reſting barely on the defenſive, we may obſerve, that the only moral attributes that can be ſuppoſed inconſiſtent with the permiſſion of ſin, are either goodneſs or juſtice.

The defenders of neceſſity, with whom we have to do in this point, as they maintain that goodneſs is the only eſſential moral attribute of the Deity, and the motive of all his actions, muſt, if they will be conſiſtent, maintain, That

to

to will, and directly to cauſe ſin, much more not to hinder it, is conſiſtent with perfect goodneſs, nay, that goodneſs is a ſufficient motive to juſtify the willing and directly cauſing it.

With regard to them, therefore, it is ſurely unneceſſary to attempt to reconcile the permiſſion of ſin with the goodneſs of GOD, ſince an inconſiſtency between that attribute and the cauſing of ſin would overturn their whole ſyſtem.

If the cauſing of moral evil, and being the real author of it, be conſiſtent with perfect goodneſs, what pretence can there be to ſay, that not to hinder it is inconſiſtent with perfect goodneſs?

What is incumbent upon them, therefore, to prove, is, That the permiſſion of ſin is inconſiſtent with juſtice; and, upon this point, we are ready to join iſſue with them.

But what pretence can there be to ſay, that the permiſſion of ſin is perfectly conſiſtent with goodneſs in the Deity, but inconſiſtent with juſtice?

Is it not as eaſy to conceive, that he ſhould permit ſin, though virtue be his delight, as that he inflicts miſery, when his ſole delight is to beſtow happineſs? Should it appear incredible, that the permiſſion of ſin may tend to promote virtue, to them who believe that the infliction of miſery is neceſſary to promote happineſs?

The juſtice, as well as the goodneſs of GOD's moral government of mankind, appears in this: That

That his laws are not arbitrary nor grievous, as it is only by the obedience of them that our nature can be perfected and qualified for future happineſs; that he is ready to aid our weakneſs, to help our infirmities, and not to ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear; that he is not ſtrict to mark iniquity, or to execute judgment ſpeedily againſt an evil work, but is long-ſuffering, and waits to be gracious; that he is ready to receive the humble penitent to his favour; that he is no reſpecter of perſons, but in every nation he that fears GOD and works righteouſneſs is accepted of him; that of every man he will require an account, proportioned to the talents he hath received; that he delights in mercy, but hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked; and therefore in puniſhing will never go beyond the demerit of the criminal, nor beyond what the rules of his univerſal government require.

There were, in ancient ages, ſome who ſaid, the way of the LORD is not equal; to whom the Prophet, in the name of GOD, makes this reply, which, in all ages, is ſufficient to repel this accuſation. Hear now, O houſe of Iſrael, is not my way equal, are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity; for his iniquity which he hath done ſhall he die. Again, when a wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doth that which

which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive. O houſe of Iſrael, are not my ways equal, are not your ways unequal? Repent, and turn from all your tranſgreſſions, ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruin. Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions whereby you have tranſgreſſed, and make you a new heart and a new ſpirit, for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? For I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth, ſaith the LORD GOD.

Another argument for neceſſity has been lately offered, which we ſhall very briefly conſider.

It has been maintained, that the power of thinking is the reſult of a certain modification of matter, and that a certain configuration of brain makes a ſoul; and, if man be wholly a material being, it is ſaid, that it will not be denied, that he muſt be a mechanical being; that the doctrine of neceſſity is a direct inference from that of materialiſm, and its undoubted conſequence.

As this argument can have no weight with thoſe who do not ſee reaſon to embrace this ſyſtem of materialiſm; ſo, even with thoſe who do, it ſeems to me to be a mere ſophiſm.

Philoſophers have been wont to conceive matter to be an inert paſſive being, and to have certain properties inconſiſtent with the power of thinking or of acting. But a Philoſopher ariſes, who proves, we ſhall ſuppoſe, that we were quite miſtaken in our notion of matter; that it has not the properties we ſuppoſed, and, in fact, has

has no properties but thoſe of attraction and repulſion; but ſtill he thinks, that, being matter, it will not be denied that it is a mechanical being, and that the doctrine of neceſſity is a direct inference from that of materialiſm.

Herein, however, he deceives himſelf. If matter be what we conceived it to be, it is equally incapable of thinking and of acting freely. But if the properties, from which we drew this concluſion, have no reality, as he thinks he has proved; if it have the powers of attraction and repulſion, and require only a certain configuration, to make it think rationally, it will be impoſſible to ſhew any good reaſon why the ſame configuration may not make it act rationally and freely. If its reproach of ſolidity, inertneſs and ſluggiſhneſs be wiped off; and if it be raiſed in our eſteem to a nearer approach to the nature of what we call ſpiritual and immaterial beings, why ſhould it ſtill be nothing but a mechanical being? Is its ſolidity, inertneſs and ſluggiſhneſs, to be firſt removed to make it capable of thinking, and then reſtored in order to make it incapable of acting?

Thoſe, therefore, who reaſon juſtly from this ſyſtem of materialiſm will eaſily perceive, that the doctrine of neceſſity is ſo far from being a direct inference, that it can receive no ſupport from it.

To conclude this Eſſay: Extremes of all kinds ought to be avoided; yet men are prone to run

into them; and, to ſhun one extreme, we often run into the contrary.

Of all extremes of opinion, none are more dangerous than thoſe that exalt the powers of man too high, on the one hand, or ſink them too low, on the other.

By raiſing them too high, we feed pride and vain-glory, we loſe the ſenſe of our dependence upon GOD, and engage in attempts beyond our abilities. By depreſſing them too low, we cut the ſinews of action and of obligation, and are tempted to think, that, as we can do nothing, we have nothing to do, but to be carried paſſively along by the ſtream of neceſſity.

Some good men, apprehending that, to kill pride and vain-glory, our active powers cannot be too much depreſſed, have been led, by zeal for religion, to deprive us of all active power.

Other good men, by a like zeal, have been led to depreciate the human underſtanding, and to put out the light of nature and reaſon, in order to exalt that of revelation.

Thoſe weapons which were taken up in ſupport of religion, are now employed to overturn it; and what was, by ſome, accounted the bulwark of orthodoxy, is become the ſtrong hold of atheiſm and infidelity.

Atheiſts join hands with Theologians, in depriving man of all active power, that they may deſtroy all moral obligation, and all ſenſe of right and wrong. They join hands with Theologians,

logians, in depreciating the human underſtanding, that they may lead us into abſolute ſcepticiſm.

God, in mercy to the human race, has made us of ſuch a frame, that no ſpeculative opinion whatſoever can root out the ſenſe of guilt and demerit when we do wrong, nor the peace and joy of a good conſcience when we do what is right. No ſpeculative opinion can root out a regard to the teſtimony of our ſenſes, of our memory, and of our rational faculties. But we have reaſon to be jealous of opinions which run counter to thoſe natural ſentiments of the human mind, and tend to ſhake, though they never can eradicate them.

There is little reaſon to fear, that the conduct of men, with regard to the concerns of the preſent life, will ever be much affected, either by the doctrine of neceſſity, or by ſcepticiſm. It were to be wiſhed, that men's conduct, with regard to the concerns of another life, were in as little danger from thoſe opinions.

In the preſent ſtate, we ſee ſome who zealouſly maintain the doctrine of neceſſity, others who as zealouſly maintain that of liberty. One would be apt to think, that a practical belief of theſe contrary ſyſtems ſhould produce very different conduct in them that hold them; yet we ſee no ſuch difference in the affairs of common life.

The fataliſt deliberates, and reſolves, and plights his faith. He lays down a plan of con-

duct, and proſecutes it with vigour and induſtry. He exhorts and commands, and holds thoſe to be anſwerable for their conduct to whom he hath committed any charge. He blames thoſe that are falſe or unfaithful to him as other men do. He perceives dignity and worth in ſome characters and actions, and in others demerit and turpitude. He reſents injuries, and is grateful for good offices.

If any man ſhould plead the doctrine of neceſſity to exculpate murder, theft, or robbery, or even wilful negligence in the diſcharge of his duty, his judge, though a fataliſt, if he had common ſenſe, would laugh at ſuch a plea, and would not allow it even to alleviate the crime.

In all ſuch caſes, he ſees that it would be abſurd not to act and to judge as thoſe ought to do who believe themſelves and other men to be free agents, juſt as the ſceptic, to avoid abſurdity, muſt, when he goes into the world, act and judge like other men who are not ſceptics.

If the fataliſt be as little influenced by the opinion of neceſſity in his moral and religious concerns, and in his expectations concerning another world, as he is in the common affairs of life, his ſpeculative opinion will probably do him little hurt. But, if he truſt ſo far to the doctrine of neceſſity, as to indulge ſloth and inactivity in his duty, and hope to exculpate himſelf to his Maker by that doctrine, let him conſider whether he ſuſtains this excuſe from his ſervants

ſervants and dependants, when they are negligent or unfaithful in what is committed to their charge.

Biſhop BUTLER, in his *Analogy*, has an excellent chapter upon *the opinion of neceſſity conſidered as influencing practice*, which I think highly deſerving the conſideration of thoſe who are inclined to that opinion.

ESSAY V.

OF MORALS.

CHAP. I.

Of the Firſt Principles of Morals.

MORALS, like all other ſciences, muſt have firſt principles, on which all moral reaſoning is grounded.

In every branch of knowledge where diſputes have been raiſed, it is uſeful to diſtinguiſh the firſt principles from the ſuperſtructure. They are the foundation on which the whole fabric of the ſcience leans; and whatever is not ſupported by this foundation can have no ſtability.

In all rational belief, the thing believed is either itſelf a firſt principle, or it is by juſt reaſoning deduced from firſt principles. When men differ about deductions of reaſoning, the appeal muſt be made to the rules of reaſoning, which have been very unanimouſly fixed from the days of ARISTOTLE. But when they differ about a firſt principle, the appeal is made to another tribunal; to that of common ſenſe.

How

How the genuine deciſions of common ſenſe may be diſtinguiſhed from the counterfeit, has been conſidered in eſſay ſixth, on the Intellectual Powers of Man, chapter fourth, to which the reader is referred. What I would here obſerve is, That as firſt principles differ from deductions of reaſoning in the nature of their evidence, and muſt be tried by a different ſtandard when they are called in queſtion, it is of importance to know to which of theſe two claſſes a truth which we would examine, belongs. When they are not diſtinguiſhed, men are apt to demand proof for every thing they think fit to deny: And when we attempt to prove by direct argument, what is really ſelf-evident, the reaſoning will always be inconcluſive; for it will either take for granted the thing to be proved, or ſomething not more evident; and ſo, inſtead of giving ſtrength to the concluſion, will rather tempt thoſe to doubt of it, who never did ſo before.

I propoſe, therefore, in this chapter, to point out ſome of the firſt principles of morals, without pretending to a complete enumeration.

The principles I am to mention, relate either to virtue in general, or to the different particular branches of virtue, or to the compariſon of virtues where they ſeem to interfere.

1. There are ſome things in human conduct, that merit approbation and praiſe, others that merit blame and puniſhment; and different de-

grees either of approbation or of blame, are due to different actions.

2. What is in no degree voluntary, can neither deſerve moral approbation nor blame.

3. What is done from unavoidable neceſſity may be agreeable or diſagreeable, uſeful or hurtful, but cannot be the object either of blame or of moral approbation.

4. Men may be highly culpable in omitting what they ought to have done, as well as in doing what they ought not.

5. We ought to uſe the beſt means we can to be well informed of our duty, by ſerious attention to moral inſtruction; by obſerving what we approve, and what we diſapprove, in other men, whether our acquaintance, or thoſe whoſe actions are recorded in hiſtory; by reflecting often, in a calm and diſpaſſionate hour, on our own paſt conduct, that we may diſcern what was wrong, what was right, and what might have been better; by deliberating coolly and impartially upon our future conduct, as far as we can foreſee the opportunities we may have of doing good, or the temptations to do wrong; and by having this principle deeply fixed in our minds, that as moral excellence is the true worth and glory of a man, ſo the knowledge of our duty is to every man, in every ſtation of life, the moſt important of all knowledge.

6. It ought to be our moſt ſerious concern to do our duty as far as we know it, and to fortify our

our minds againſt every temptation to deviate from it; by maintaining a lively ſenſe of the beauty of right conduct, and of its preſent and future reward, of the turpitude of vice, and of its bad conſequences here and hereafter; by having always in our eye the nobleſt examples; by the habit of ſubjecting our paſſions to the government of reaſon; by firm purpoſes and reſolutions with regard to our conduct; by avoiding occaſions of temptation when we can; and by imploring the aid of him who made us, in every hour of temptation.

Theſe principles concerning virtue and vice in general, muſt appear ſelf-evident to every man who hath a conſcience, and who hath taken pains to exerciſe this natural power of his mind. I proceed to others that are more particular.

1. We ought to prefer a greater good, though more diſtant, to a leſs; and a leſs evil to a greater.

A regard to our own good, though we had no conſcience, dictates this principle; and we cannot help diſapproving the man that acts contrary to it, as deſerving to loſe the good which he wantonly threw away, and to ſuffer the evil which he knowingly brought upon his own head.

We obſerved before, that the ancient moraliſts, and many among the modern, have deduced the whole of morals from this principle, and that when

when we make a right eſtimate of goods and evils according to their degree, their dignity, their duration, and according as they are more or leſs in our power, it leads to the practice of every virtue: More directly, indeed, to the virtues of ſelf-government, to prudence, to temperance, and to fortitude; and, though more indirectly, even to juſtice, humanity, and all the ſocial virtues, when their influence upon our happineſs is well underſtood.

Though it be not the nobleſt principle of conduct, it has this peculiar advantage, that its force is felt by the moſt ignorant, and even by the moſt abandoned.

Let a man's moral judgment be ever ſo little improved by exerciſe, or ever ſo much corrupted by bad habits, he cannot be indifferent to his own happineſs or miſery. When he is become inſenſible to every nobler motive to right conduct, he cannot be inſenſible to this. And though to act from this motive ſolely may be called *prudence* rather than *virtue*, yet this prudence deſerves ſome regard upon its own account, and much more as it is the friend and ally of virtue, and the enemy of all vice; and as it gives a favourable teſtimony of virtue to thoſe who are deaf to every other recommendation.

If a man can be induced to do his duty even from a regard to his own happineſs, he will ſoon find reaſon to love virtue for her own ſake, and to act from motives leſs mercenary.

* I cannot therefore approve of thoſe moraliſts, who would baniſh all perſuaſives to virtue taken from the conſideration of private good. In the preſent ſtate of human nature theſe are not uſeleſs to the beſt, and they are the only means left of reclaiming the abandoned.

2. As far as the intention of nature appears in the conſtitution of man, we ought to comply with that intention, and to act agreeably to it.

The Author of our being hath given us not only the power of acting within a limited ſphere, but various principles or ſprings of action, of different nature and dignity, to direct us in the exercife of our active power.

From the conſtitution of every ſpecies of the inferior animals, and eſpecially from the active principles which nature has given them, we eaſily perceive the manner of life for which nature intended them; and they uniformly act the part to which they are led by their conſtitution, without any reflection upon it, or intention of obeying its dictates. Man only, of the inhabitants of this world, is made capable of obſerving his own conſtitution, what kind of life it is made for, and of acting according to that intention, or contrary to it. He only is capable of yielding an intentional obedience to the dictates of his nature, or of rebelling againſt them.

In treating of the principles of action in man, it has been ſhewn, that as his natural inſtincts and bodily appetites, are well adapted to the preſervation

preſervation of his natural life, and to the continuance of the ſpecies; ſo his natural deſires, affections, and paſſions, when uncorrupted by vicious habits, and under the government of the leading principles of reaſon and conſcience, are excellently fitted for the rational and ſocial life. Every vicious action ſhews an exceſs, or defect, or wrong direction of ſome natural ſpring of action, and therefore may, very juſtly, be ſaid to be unnatural. Every virtuous action agrees with the uncorrupted principles of human nature.

The Stoics defined virtue to be a life according to nature. Some of them more accurately, a life according to the nature of man, in ſo far as it is ſuperior to that of brutes. The life of a brute is according to the nature of the brute; but it is neither virtuous nor vicious. The life of a moral agent cannot be according to his nature, unleſs it be virtuous. That conſcience, which is in every man's breaſt, is the law of GOD written in his heart, which he cannot diſobey without acting unnaturally, and being ſelf-condemned.

The intention of nature, in the various active principles of man, in the deſires of power, of knowledge, and of eſteem, in the affection to children, to near relations, and to the communities to which we belong, in gratitude, in compaſſion, and even in reſentment and emulation, is very obvious, and has been pointed out in treating of thoſe principles. Nor is it leſs evident,

dent, that reaſon and conſcience are given us to regulate the inferior principles, ſo that they may conſpire, in a regular and conſiſtent plan of life, in purſuit of ſome worthy end.

3. No man is born for himſelf only. Every man, therefore, ought to conſider himſelf as a member of the common ſociety of mankind, and of thoſe ſubordinate ſocieties to which he belongs, ſuch as family, friends, neighbourhood, country, and to do as much good as he can, and as little hurt to the ſocieties of which he is a part.

This axiom leads directly to the practice of every ſocial virtue, and indirectly to the virtues of ſelf-government, by which only we can be qualified for diſcharging the duty we owe to ſociety.

4. In every caſe, we ought to act that part towards another, which we would judge to be right in him to act toward us, if we were in his circumſtances and he in ours; or, more generally, what we approve in others, that we ought to practiſe in like circumſtances, and what we condemn in others we ought not to do.

If there be any ſuch thing as right and wrong in the conduct of moral agents, it muſt be the ſame to all in the ſame circumſtances.

We ſtand all in the ſame relation to him who made us, and will call us to account for our conduct; for with him there is no reſpect of perſons. We ſtand in the ſame relation to one another

another as members of the great community of mankind. The duties conſequent upon the different ranks and offices and relations of men are the ſame to all in the ſame circumſtances.

It is not want of judgment, but want of candour and impartiality, that hinders men from diſcerning what they owe to others. They are quickſighted enough in diſcerning what is due to themſelves. When they are injured, or ill treated, they ſee it, and feel reſentment. It is the want of candour that makes men uſe one meaſure for the duty they owe to others, and another meaſure for the duty that others owe to them in like circumſtances. That men ought to judge with candour, as in all other caſes, ſo eſpecially in what concerns their moral conduct, is ſurely ſelf-evident to every intelligent being. The man who takes offence when he is injured in his perſon, in his property, in his good name, pronounces judgment againſt himſelf if he act ſo toward his neighbour.

As the equity and obligation of this rule of conduct is ſelf-evident to every man who hath a conſcience; ſo it is, of all the rules of morality, the moſt comprehenſive, and truly deſerves the encomium given it by the higheſt authority, that *it is the law and the prophets.*

It comprehends every rule of juſtice without exception. It comprehends all the relative duties, ariſing either from the more permanent relations of parent and child, of maſter and ſervant,

vant, of magiſtrate and ſubject, of huſband and wife, or from the more tranſient relations of rich and poor, of buyer and ſeller, of debtor and creditor, of benefactor and beneficiary, of friend and enemy. It comprehends every duty of charity and humanity, and even of courteſy and good manners.

Nay, I think, that, without any force or ſtraining, it extends even to the duties of ſelf-government. For, as every man approves in others the virtues of prudence, temperance, ſelf-command and fortitude, he muſt perceive, that what is right in others muſt be right in himſelf in like circumſtances.

To ſum up all, he who acts invariably by this rule will never deviate from the path of his duty, but from an error of judgment. And, as he feels the obligation that he and all men are under to uſe the beſt means in his power to have his judgment well-informed in matters of duty, his errors will only be ſuch as are invincible.

It may be obſerved, that this axiom ſuppoſes a faculty in man by which he can diſtinguiſh right conduct from wrong. It ſuppoſes alſo, that, by this faculty, we eaſily perceive the right and the wrong in other men that are indifferent to us; but are very apt to be blinded by the partiality of ſelfiſh paſſions when the caſe concerns ourſelves. Every claim we have againſt others is apt to be magnified by ſelf-love, when viewed directly. A change of perſons removes this

this prejudice, and brings the claim to appear in its juſt magnitude.

5. To every man who believes the exiſtence, the perfections, and the providence of GOD, the veneration and ſubmiſſion we owe to him is ſelf-evident. Right ſentiments of the Deity and of his works, not only make the duty we owe to him obvious to every intelligent being, but likewiſe add the authority of a divine law to every rule of right conduct.

There is another claſs of axioms in morals, by which, when there ſeems to be an oppoſition between the actions that different virtues lead to, we determine to which the preference is due.

Between the ſeveral virtues, as they are diſpoſitions of mind, or determinations of will to act according to a certain general rule, there can be no oppoſition. They dwell together moſt amicably, and give mutual aid and ornament, without the poſſibility of hoſtility or oppoſition, and, taken altogether, make one uniform and conſiſtent rule of conduct. But, between particular external actions, which different virtues would lead to, there may be an oppoſition. Thus, the ſame man may be in his heart, generous, grateful and juſt. Theſe diſpoſitions ſtrengthen, but never can weaken one another. Yet it may happen, that an external action which generoſity or gratitude ſolicits, juſtice may forbid.

That

That in all ſuch caſes, unmerited generoſity ſhould yield to gratitude, and both to juſtice, is ſelf-evident. Nor is it leſs ſo, that unmerited beneficence to thoſe who are at eaſe ſhould yield to compaſſion to the miſerable, and external acts of piety to works of mercy, becauſe GOD loves mercy more than ſacrifice.

At the ſame time, we perceive, that thoſe acts of virtue which ought to yield in the caſe of a competition, have moſt intrinſic worth when there is no competition. Thus, it is evident that there is more worth in pure and unmerited benevolence than in compaſſion, more in compaſſion than in gratitude, and more in gratitude than in juſtice.

I call theſe *firſt principles*, becauſe they appear to me to have in themſelves an intuitive evidence which I cannot reſiſt. I find I can expreſs them in other words. I can illuſtrate them by examples and authorities, and perhaps can deduce one of them from another; but I am not able to deduce them from other principles that are more evident. And I find the beſt moral reaſonings of authors I am acquainted with, ancient and modern, Heathen and Chriſtian, to be grounded upon one or more of them.

The evidence of mathematical axioms is not diſcerned till men come to a certain degree of maturity of underſtanding. A boy muſt have formed the general conception of *quantity*, and of *more* and *leſs* and *equal*, of *ſum* and *difference*;

and he muſt have been accuſtomed to judge of theſe relations in matters of common life, before he can perceive the evidence of the mathematical axiom, that equal quantities, added to equal quantities, make equal ſums.

In like manner, our moral judgment, or conſcience, grows to maturity from an imperceptible ſeed, planted by our Creator. When we are capable of contemplating the actions of other men, or of reflecting upon our own calmly and diſpaſſionately, we begin to perceive in them the qualities of honeſt and diſhoneſt, of honourable and baſe, of right and wrong, and to feel the ſentiments of moral approbation and diſapprobation.

Theſe ſentiments are at firſt feeble, eaſily warped by paſſions and prejudices, and apt to yield to authority. By uſe and time, the judgment, in morals as in other matters, gathers ſtrength, and feels more vigour. We begin to diſtinguiſh the dictates of paſſion from thoſe of cool reaſon, and to perceive, that it is not always ſafe to rely upon the judgment of others. By an impulſe of nature, we venture to judge for ourſelves, as we venture to walk by ourſelves.

There is a ſtrong analogy between the progreſs of the body from infancy to maturity, and the progreſs of all the powers of the mind. This progreſſion in both is the work of nature, and in both may be greatly aided or hurt by proper

proper education. It is natural to a man to be able to walk or run or leap; but if his limbs had been kept in fetters from his birth, he would have none of thoſe powers. It is no leſs natural to a man trained in ſociety, and accuſtomed to judge of his own actions and thoſe of other men, to perceive a right and a wrong, an honourable and a baſe, in human conduct; and to ſuch a man, I think, the principles of morals I have above mentioned will appear ſelf-evident. Yet there may be individuals of the human ſpecies ſo little accuſtomed to think or judge of any thing, but of gratifying their animal appetites, as to have hardly any conception of right or wrong in conduct, or any moral judgment; as there certainly are ſome who have not the conceptions and the judgment neceſſary to underſtand the axioms of geometry.

From the principles above mentioned, the whole ſyſtem of moral conduct follows ſo eaſily, and with ſo little aid of reaſoning, that every man of common underſtanding, who wiſhes to know his duty, may know it. The path of duty is a plain path which the upright in heart can rarely miſtake. Such it muſt be, ſince every man is bound to walk in it. There are ſome intricate caſes in morals which admit of diſputation; but theſe ſeldom occur in practice; and, when they do, the learned diſputant has no great advantage: For the unlearned man, who uſes the beſt means in his power to know his

duty, and acts according to his knowledge, is inculpable in the ſight of GOD and man. He may err, but he is not guilty of immorality.

CHAP. II.

Of Syſtems of Morals.

IF the knowledge of our duty be ſo level to the apprehenſion of all men, as has been repreſented in the laſt chapter, it may ſeem hardly to deſerve the name of a ſcience. It may ſeem that there is no need for inſtruction in morals.

From what cauſe then has it happened, that we have many large and learned ſyſtems of moral philoſophy, and ſyſtems of natural juriſprudence, or the law of nature and nations; and that, in modern times, public profeſſions have been inſtituted in moſt places of education for inſtructing youth in theſe branches of knowledge?

This event, I think, may be accounted for, and the utility of ſuch ſyſtems and profeſſions juſtified, without ſuppoſing any difficulty or intricacy in the knowledge of our duty.

I am far from thinking inſtruction in morals unneceſſary. Men may, to the end of life, be ignorant of ſelf-evident truths. They may, to the end of life, entertain groſs abſurdities. Experience ſhews that this happens often in matters

ters that are indifferent. Much more may it happen in matters where intereſt, paſſion, prejudice and faſhion, are ſo apt to pervert the judgment.

The moſt obvious truths are not perceived without ſome ripeneſs of judgment. For we ſee, that children may be made to believe any thing, though ever ſo abſurd. Our judgment of things is ripened, not by time only, but chiefly by being exerciſed about things of the ſame or of a ſimilar kind.

Judgment, even in things ſelf-evident, requires a clear, diſtinct and ſteady conception of the things about which we judge. Our conceptions are at firſt obſcure and wavering. The habit of attending to them is neceſſary to make them diſtinct and ſteady; and this habit requires an exertion of mind to which many of our animal principles are unfriendly. The love of truth calls for it; but its ſtill voice is often drowned by the louder call of ſome paſſion, or we are hindered from liſtening to it by lazineſs and deſultorineſs. Thus men often remain through life ignorant of things which they needed but to open their eyes to ſee, and which they would have ſeen if their attention had been turned to them.

The moſt knowing derive the greateſt part of their knowledge, even in things obvious, from inſtruction and information, and from being

taught to exerciſe their natural faculties, which without inſtruction, would lie dormant.

I am very apt to think, that, if a man could be reared from infancy, without any ſociety of his fellow-creatures, he would hardly ever ſhew any ſign, either of moral judgment, or of the power of reaſoning. His own actions would be directed by his animal appetites and paſſions, without cool reflection, and he would have no acceſs to improve, by obſerving the conduct of other beings like himſelf.

The power of vegetation in the ſeed of a plant, without heat and moiſture, would for ever lie dormant. The rational and moral powers of man would perhaps lie dormant without inſtruction and example. Yet theſe powers are a part, and the nobleſt part, of his conſtitution; as the power of vegetation is of the ſeed.

Our firſt moral conceptions are probably got by attending coolly to the conduct of others, and obſerving what moves our approbation, what our indignation. Theſe ſentiments ſpring from our moral faculty as naturally as the ſenſations of ſweet and bitter from the faculty of taſte. They have their natural objects. But moſt human actions are of a mixed nature, and have various colours, according as they are viewed on different ſides. Prejudice againſt, or in favour of the perſon, is apt to warp our opinion. It requires attention and candour to diſtinguiſh the good from the ill, and, without favour or prejudice,

prejudice, to form a clear and impartial judgment. In this we may be greatly aided by inſtruction.

He muſt be very ignorant of human nature, who does not perceive that the ſeed of virtue in the mind of man, like that of a tender plant in an unkindly ſoil, requires care and culture in the firſt period of life, as well as our own exertion when we come to maturity.

If the irregularities of paſſion and appetite be timely checked, and good habits planted; if we be excited by good examples, and bad examples be ſhewn in their proper colour; if the attention be prudently directed to the precepts of wiſdom and virtue, as the mind is capable of receiving them; a man thus trained will rarely be at a loſs to diſtinguiſh good from ill in his own conduct, without the labour of reaſoning.

The bulk of mankind have but little of this culture in the proper ſeaſon; and what they have is often unſkilfully applied; by which means bad habits gather ſtrength, and falſe notions of pleaſure, of honour, and of intereſt, occupy the mind. They give little attention to what is right and honeſt. Conſcience is ſeldom conſulted, and ſo little exerciſed, that its deciſions are weak and wavering. Although, therefore, to a ripe underſtanding, free from prejudice, and accuſtomed to judge of the morality of actions, moſt truths in morals will appear ſelf-evident, it does not follow that moral inſtruc-

tion is unneceſſary in the firſt part of life, or that it may not be very profitable in its more advanced period.

The hiſtory of paſt ages ſhews that nations, highly civilized and greatly enlightened in many arts and ſciences, may, for ages, not only hold the groſſeſt abſurdities with regard to the Deity and his worſhip, but with regard to the duty we owe to our fellow-men, particularly to children, to ſervants, to ſtrangers, to enemies, and to thoſe who differ from us in religious opinions.

Such corruptions in religion, and in morals, had ſpread ſo wide among mankind, and were ſo confirmed by cuſtom, as to require a light from heaven to correct them. Revelation was not intended to ſuperſede, but to aid the uſe of our natural faculties; and I doubt not, but the attention given to moral truths, in ſuch ſyſtems as we have mentioned, has contributed much to correct the errors and prejudices of former ages, and may continue to have the ſame good effect in time to come.

It needs not ſeem ſtrange, that ſyſtems of morals may ſwell to great magnitude, if we conſider that, although the general principles be few and ſimple, their application extends to every part of human conduct, in every condition, every relation, and every tranſaction of life. They are the rule of life to the magiſtrate and to the ſubject, to the maſter and to the ſervant, to the parent and to the child, to the fellow-citizen and

to

to the alien, to the friend and to the enemy, to the buyer and to the ſeller, to the borrower and to the lender. Every human creature is ſubject to their authority in his actions and words, and even in his thoughts. They may, in this reſpect, be compared to the laws of motion in the natural world, which, though few and ſimple, ſerve to regulate an infinite variety of operations throughout the univerſe.

And as the beauty of the laws of motion is diſplayed in the moſt ſtriking manner, when we trace them through all the variety of their effects; ſo the divine beauty and ſanctity of the principles of morals, appear moſt auguſt when we take a comprehenſive view of their application to every condition and relation, and to every tranſaction of human ſociety.

This is, or ought to be, the deſign of ſyſtems of morals. They may be made more or leſs extenſive, having no limits fixed by nature, but the wide circle of human tranſactions. When the principles are applied to theſe in detail, the detail is pleaſant and profitable. It requires no profound reaſoning, (excepting, perhaps, in a few diſputable points). It admits of the moſt agreeable illuſtration from examples and authorities; it ſerves to exerciſe, and thereby to ſtrengthen moral judgment. And one who has given much attention to the duty of man, in all the various relations and circumſtances of life, will

will probably be more enlightened in his own duty, and more able to enlighten others.

The firſt writers in morals, we are acquainted with, delivered their moral inſtructions, not in ſyſtems, but in ſhort unconnected ſentences, or aphoriſms. They ſaw no need for deductions of reaſoning, becauſe the truths they delivered could not but be admitted by the candid and attentive.

Subſequent writers, to improve the way of treating this ſubject, gave method and arrangement to moral truths, by reducing them under certain diviſions and ſubdiviſions, as parts of one whole. By this means the whole is more eaſily comprehended and remembered, and from this arrangement gets the name of a ſyſtem and of a ſcience.

A ſyſtem of morals is not like a ſyſtem of geometry, where the ſubſequent parts derive their evidence from the preceding, and one chain of reaſoning is carried on from the beginning; ſo that, if the arrangement is changed, the chain is broken, and the evidence is loſt. It reſembles more a ſyſtem of botany, or mineralogy, where the ſubſequent parts depend not for their evidence upon the preceding, and the arrangement is made to facilitate apprehenſion and memory, and not to give evidence.

Morals have been methodiſed in different ways. The ancients commonly arranged them under the four cardinal virtues of prudence, temperance,

temperance, fortitude, and juſtice. Chriſtian writers, I think more properly, under the three heads of the duty we owe to God, to ourſelves, and to our neighbour. One diviſion may be more comprehenſive, or more natural, than another; but the truths arranged are the ſame, and their evidence the ſame in all.

I ſhall only farther obſerve, with regard to ſyſtems of morals, that they have been made more voluminous, and more intricate, partly by mixing political queſtions with morals, which I think improper, becauſe they belong to a different ſcience, and are grounded on different principles; partly by making what is commonly, but I think improperly, called *the Theory of Morals*, a part of the ſyſtem.

By the theory of morals is meant a juſt account of the ſtructure of our moral powers; that is, of thoſe powers of the mind by which we have our moral conceptions, and diſtinguiſh right from wrong in human actions. This, indeed, is an intricate ſubject, and there have been various theories and much controverſy about it in ancient and in modern times. But it has little connection with the knowledge of our duty; and thoſe who differ moſt in the theory of our moral powers, agree in the practical rules of morals which they dictate.

As a man may be a good judge of colours, and of the other viſible qualities of objects, without any knowledge of the anatomy of the eye, and

of

of the theory of viſion; ſo a man may have a very clear and comprehenſive knowledge of what is right and what is wrong in human conduct, who never ſtudied the ſtructure of our moral powers.

A good ear in muſic may be much improved by attention and practice in that art; but very little by ſtudying the anatomy of the ear, and the theory of ſound. In order to acquire a good eye or a good ear in the arts that require them, the theory of viſion and the theory of ſound, are by no means neceſſary, and indeed of very little uſe. Of as little neceſſity or uſe is what we call the theory of morals, in order to improve our moral judgment.

I mean not to depreciate this branch of knowledge. It is a very important part of the philoſophy of the human mind, and ought to be conſidered as ſuch, but not as any part of morals. By the name we give to it, and by the cuſtom of making it a part of every ſyſtem of morals, men may be led into this groſs miſtake, which I wiſh to obviate, That in order to underſtand his duty, a man muſt needs be a philoſopher and a metaphyſician.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of Syſtems of Natural Juriſprudence.

SYSTEMS of natural juriſprudence, of the rights of peace and war, or of the law of nature and nations, are a modern invention, which ſoon acquired ſuch reputation, as gave occaſion to many public eſtabliſhments for teaching it along with the other ſciences. It has ſo cloſe a relation to morals, that it may anſwer the purpoſe of a ſyſtem of morals, and is commonly put in the place of it, as far, at leaſt, as concerns our duty to our fellow-men. They differ in the name and form, but agree in ſubſtance. This will appear from a ſlight attention to the nature of both.

The direct intention of morals is to teach the duty of men: that of natural juriſprudence, to teach the rights of men. Right and duty are things very different, and have even a kind of oppoſition; yet they are ſo related, that the one cannot even be conceived without the other; and he that underſtands the one muſt underſtand the other.

They have the ſame relation which credit has to debt. As all credit ſuppoſes an equivalent debt; ſo all right ſuppoſes a correſponding duty. There can be no credit in one party without an equivalent debt in another party; and there

there can be no right in one party, without a correſponding duty in another party. The ſum of credit ſhews the ſum of debt; and the ſum of mens rights ſhews, in like manner, the ſum of their duty to one another.

The word *right* has a very different meaning, according as it is applied to actions or to perſons. A right action is an action agreeable to our duty. But when we ſpeak of the rights of men, the word has a very different and a more artificial meaning. It is a term of art in law, and ſignifies all that a man may lawfully do, all that he may lawfully poſſeſs and uſe, and all that he may lawfully claim of any other perſon.

This comprehenſive meaning of the word *right*, and of the Latin word *jus*, which correſponds to it, though long adopted into common language, is too artificial to be the birth of common language. It is a term of art, contrived by Civilians when the civil law became a profeſſion.

The whole end and object of law is to protect the ſubjects in all that they may lawfully do, or poſſeſs, or demand. This threefold object of law, Civilians have comprehended under the word *jus* or *right*, which they define, *Facultas aliquid agendi, vel poſſidendi, vel ab alio conſequendi:* A lawful claim to do any thing, to poſſeſs any thing, or to demand ſome preſtation from ſome other perſon. The firſt of theſe may be called the right of *liberty*, the ſecond that of *property*, which is alſo called a *real right*, the third

third is called *perſonal right*, becauſe it reſpects ſome particular perſon or perſons of whom the preſtation may be demanded.

We can be at no loſs to perceive the duties correſponding to the ſeveral kinds of rights. What I have a right to do, it is the duty of all men not to hinder me from doing. What is my property or real right, no man ought to take from me; or to moleſt me in the uſe and enjoyment of it. And what I have a right to demand of any man, it is his duty to perform. Between the right, on the one hand, and the duty, on the other, there is not only a neceſſary connection, but, in reality, they are only different expreſſions of the ſame meaning; juſt as it is the ſame thing to ſay I am your debtor, and to ſay you are my creditor; or as it is the ſame thing to ſay I am your father, and to ſay you are my ſon.

Thus we ſee, that there is ſuch a correſpondence between the rights of men and the duties of men, that the one points out the other; and a ſyſtem of the one may be ſubſtituted for a ſyſtem of the other.

But here an objection occurs. It may be ſaid, That although every right implies a duty, yet every duty does not imply a right. Thus, it may be my duty to do a humane or kind office to a man who has no claim of right to it; and therefore a ſyſtem of the rights of men, though it teach all the duties of ſtrict juſtice, yet it leaves out all the duties of charity and humanity, without

without which the ſyſtem of morals muſt be very lame.

In anſwer to this objection, it may be obſerved, That, as there is a ſtrict notion of juſtice, in which it is diſtinguiſhed from humanity and charity, ſo there is a more extenſive ſignification of it, in which it includes thoſe virtues. The ancient moraliſts, both Greek and Roman, under the cardinal virtue of juſtice, included beneficence; and, in this extenſive ſenſe, it is often uſed in common language. The like may be ſaid of right, which, in a ſenſe not uncommon, is extended to every proper claim of humanity and charity, as well as to the claims of ſtrict juſtice. But, as it is proper to diſtinguiſh theſe two kinds of claims by different names, writers in natural juriſprudence have given the name of *perfect* rights to the claims of ſtrict juſtice, and that of *imperfect* rights to the claims of charity and humanity. Thus, all the duties of humanity have imperfect rights correſponding to them, as thoſe of ſtrict juſtice have perfect rights.

Another objection may be, That there is ſtill a claſs of duties to which no right, perfect or imperfect, correſponds.

We are bound in duty to pay due reſpect, not only to what is truly the right of another, but to what, through ignorance or miſtake, we believe to be his right. Thus, if my neighbour is poſſeſſed of a horſe which he ſtole, and to which he has no right; while I believe the horſe to be really

really his, and am ignorant of the theft, it is my duty to pay the ſame reſpect to this conceived right as if it were real. Here, then, is a moral obligation on one party, without any correſponding right on the other.

To ſupply this defect in the ſyſtem of rights, ſo as to make right and duty correſpond in every inſtance, writers in juriſprudence have had recourſe to ſomething like what is called a fiction of law. They give the name of *right* to the claim which even the thief hath to the goods he has ſtolen, while the theft is unknown, and to all ſimilar claims grounded on the ignorance or miſtake of the parties concerned. And to diſtinguiſh this kind of right from genuine rights, perfect or imperfect, they call it an *external* right.

Thus it appears, That although a ſyſtem of the perfect rights of men, or the rights of ſtrict juſtice, would be a lame ſubſtitute for a ſyſtem of human duty; yet when we add to it the imperfect and the external rights, it comprehends the whole duty we owe to our fellow-men.

But it may be aſked, Why ſhould men be taught their duty in this indirect way, by reflection, as it were, from the rights of other men?

Perhaps it may be thought, that this indirect way may be more agreeable to the pride of man, as we ſee that men of rank like better to hear of obligations of honour than of obligations of du-

ty (although the dictates of true honour and of duty be the ſame) for this reaſon, that honour puts a man in mind of what he owes to himſelf, whereas duty is a more humiliating idea. For a like reaſon, men may attend more willingly to their rights, which put them in mind of their dignity, than to their duties, which ſuggeſt their dependence. And we ſee that men may give great attention to their rights who give but little to their duty.

Whatever truth there may be in this, I believe better reaſons can be given why ſyſtems of natural juriſprudence have been contrived and put in the place of ſyſtems of morals.

Syſtems of civil law were invented many ages before we had any ſyſtem of natural juriſprudence; and the former ſeem to have ſuggeſted the idea of the latter.

Such is the weakneſs of human underſtanding, that no large body of knowledge can be eaſily apprehended and remembered, unleſs it be arranged and methodiſed, that is, reduced into a ſyſtem. When the laws of the Roman people were multiplied to a great degree, and the ſtudy of them became an honourable and lucrative profeſſion, it became neceſſary that they ſhould be methodiſed into a ſyſtem. And the moſt natural and obvious way of methodiſing law was found to be according to the diviſions and ſubdiviſions of mens rights, which it is the intention of law to protect.

The

The ſtudy of law produced not only ſyſtems of law, but a language proper for expreſſing them. Every art has its terms of art, for expreſſing the conceptions that belong to it; and the Civilian muſt have terms for expreſſing accurately the diviſions and ſubdiviſions of rights, and the various ways whereby they may be acquired, transferred, or extinguiſhed, in the various tranſactions of civil ſociety. He muſt have terms accurately defined, for the various crimes by which mens rights are violated, not to ſpeak of the terms which expreſs the different forms of actions at law, and the various ſteps of the procedure of judicatories.

Thoſe who have been bred to any profeſſion are very prone to uſe the terms of their profeſſion in ſpeaking or writing on ſubjects that have any analogy to it. And they may do ſo with advantage, as terms of art are commonly more preciſe in their ſignification, and better defined, than the words of common language. To ſuch perſons it is alſo very natural to model and arrange other ſubjects, as far as their nature admits, into a method ſimilar to that of the ſyſtem which fills their minds.

It might, therefore, be expected, that a Civilian, intending to give a detailed ſyſtem of morals, would uſe many of the terms of civil law, and mould it, as far as it can be done, into the form of a ſyſtem of law, or of the rights of mankind.

The neceſſary and cloſe relation of right to duty, which we before obſerved, juſtified this: And moral duty had long been conſidered as a *law of nature;* a law, not wrote on tables of ſtone or braſs, but on the heart of man; a law of greater antiquity and higher authority than the laws of particular ſtates; a law which is binding upon all men of all nations, and therefore is called by CICERO *the law of nature and of nations.*

The idea of a ſyſtem of this law was worthy of the genius of the immortal HUGO GROTIUS, and he was the firſt who executed it in ſuch a manner, as to draw the attention of the learned in all the European nations; and to give occaſion to ſeveral princes and ſtates to eſtabliſh public profeſſions for the teaching of this law.

The multitude of commentators and annotators upon this work of GROTIUS, and the public eſtabliſhments to which it gave occaſion, are ſufficient vouchers of its merit.

It is, indeed, a work ſo well deſigned, and ſo ſkilfully executed; ſo free from the ſcholaſtic jargon which infected the learned at that time, ſo much addreſſed to the common ſenſe and moral judgment of mankind, and ſo agreeably illuſtrated by examples from ancient hiſtory, and authorities from the ſentiments of ancient authors, Heathen and Chriſtian, that it muſt always be eſteemed as the capital work of a great genius upon a moſt important ſubject.

The

The utility of a juſt ſyſtem of natural juriſprudence appears, 1. As it is a ſyſtem of the moral duty we owe to men, which, by the aid they have taken from the terms and diviſions of the civil law, has been given more in detail and more ſyſtematically by writers in natural juriſprudence than it was formerly. 2. As it is the beſt preparation for the ſtudy of law, being, as it were, caſt in the mould, and uſing and explaining many of the terms of the civil law, on which the law of moſt of the European nations is grounded. 3. It is of uſe to lawyers, who ought to make their laws as agreeable as poſſible to the laws of nature. And as laws made by men, like all human works, muſt be imperfect, it points out the errors and imperfections of human laws. 4. To judges and interpreters of the law it is of uſe, becauſe that interpretation ought to be preferred which is founded in the law of nature. 5. It is of uſe in civil controverſies between ſtates, or between individuals who have no common ſuperior. In ſuch controverſies, the appeal muſt be made to the law of nature; and the ſtandard ſyſtems of it, particularly that of GROTIUS, have great authority. And, 6. to ſay no more upon this point, It is of great uſe to ſovereigns and ſtates who are above all human laws, to be ſolemnly admoniſhed of the conduct they are bound to obſerve to their own ſubjects, to the ſubjects of other ſtates, and to one another, in peace and in war. The better and the

more generally the law of nature is underſtood, the greater diſhonour, in public eſtimation, will follow every violation of it.

Some authors have imagined, that ſyſtems of natural juriſprudence ought to be confined to the perfect rights of men, becauſe the duties which correſpond to the imperfect rights, the duties of charity and humanity, cannot be enforced by human laws, but muſt be left to the judgment and conſcience of men, free from compulſion. But the ſyſtems which have had the greateſt applauſe of the public, have not followed this plan, and, I conceive, for good reaſons. *Firſt*, Becauſe a ſyſtem of perfect rights could by no means ſerve the purpoſe of a ſyſtem of morals, which ſurely is an important purpoſe. *Secondly*, Becauſe, in many caſes, it is hardly poſſible to fix the preciſe limit between juſtice and humanity, between perfect and imperfect right. Like the colours in a priſmatic image, they run into each other, ſo that the beſt eye cannot fix the preciſe boundary between them. *Thirdly*, As wiſe legiſlators and magiſtrates ought to have it as their end to make the citizens good, as well as juſt, we find, in all civilized nations, laws that are intended to encourage the duties of humanity. Where human laws cannot enforce them by puniſhments, they may encourage them by rewards. Of this the wiſeſt legiſlators have given examples; and how far this branch of legiſlation may be carried, no man can foreſee.

The

The ſubſtance of the four following chapters was wrote long ago, and read in a literary ſociety, with a view to juſtify ſome points of morals from metaphyſical objections urged againſt them in the writings of DAVID HUME, Eſq. If they anſwer that end, and, at the ſame time, ſerve to illuſtrate the account I have given of our moral powers, it is hoped that the reader will not think them improperly placed here; and that he will forgive ſome repetitions, and perhaps anachroniſms, occaſioned by their being wrote at different times, and on different occaſions.

CHAP. IV.

Whether an Action deſerving Moral Approbation, muſt be done with the belief of its being morally good.

THERE is no part of philoſophy more ſubtile and intricate than that which is called *The Theory of Morals*. Nor is there any more plain and level to the apprehenſion of man than the practical part of morals.

In the former, the Epicurean, the Peripatetic and the Stoic, had each his different ſyſtem of old; and almoſt every modern author of reputation has a ſyſtem of his own. At the ſame time, there is no branch of human knowledge in which there is ſo general an agreement among

ancients and moderns, learned and unlearned, as in the practical rules of morals.

From this diſcord in the theory, and harmony in the practical part, we may judge, that the rules of morality ſtand upon another and a firmer foundation than the theory. And of this it is eaſy to perceive the reaſon.

For, in order to know what is right and what is wrong in human conduct, we need only liſten to the dictates of our conſcience, when the mind is calm and unruffled, or attend to the judgment we form of others in like circumſtances. But, to judge of the various theories of morals, we muſt be able to analyze and diſſect, as it were, the active powers of the human mind, and eſpecially to analyze accurately that conſcience or moral power by which we diſcern right from wrong.

The conſcience may be compared to the eye in this, as in many other reſpects. The learned and the unlearned ſee objects with equal diſtinctneſs. The former have no title to dictate to the latter, as far as the eye is judge, nor is there any diſagreement about ſuch matters. But, to diſſect the eye, and to explain the theory of viſion, is a difficult point, wherein the moſt ſkilful have differed.

From this remarkable diſparity between our deciſions in the theory of morals and in the rules of morality, we may, I think, draw this concluſion, That wherever we find any diſagreement between

between the practical rules of morality, which have been received in all ages, and the principles of any of the theories advanced upon this ſubject, the practical rules ought to be the ſtandard by which the theory is to be corrected, and that it is both unſafe and unphiloſophical to warp the practical rules, in order to make them tally with a favourite theory.

The queſtion to be conſidered in this chapter belongs to the practical part of morals, and therefore is capable of a more eaſy and more certain determination. And, if it be determined in the affirmative, I conceive that it may ſerve as a touchſtone to try ſome celebrated theories which are inconſiſtent with that determination, and which have led the theoriſts to oppoſe it by very ſubtile metaphyſical arguments.

Every queſtion about what is or is not the proper object of moral approbation, belongs to practical morals, and ſuch is the queſtion now under conſideration: Whether actions deſerving moral approbation muſt be done with the belief of their being morally good? Or, Whether an action, done without any regard to duty or to the dictates of conſcience, can be entitled to moral approbation?

In every action of a moral agent, his conſcience is either altogether ſilent, or it pronounces the action to be good, or bad, or indifferent. This, I think, is a complete enumeration. If it be perfectly ſilent, the action muſt be very trifling,

fling, or appear ſo. For conſcience, in thoſe who have exerciſed it, is a very pragmatical faculty, and meddles with every part of our conduct, whether we deſire its counſel or not. And what a man does in perfect ſimplicity, without the leaſt ſuſpicion of its being bad, his heart cannot condemn him for, nor will he that knows the heart condemn him. If there was any previous culpable negligence or inattention which led him to a wrong judgment, or hindered his forming a right one, that I do not exculpate. I only conſider the action done, and the diſpoſition with which it was done, without its previous circumſtances. And in this there appears nothing that merits diſapprobation. As little can it merit any degree of moral approbation, becauſe there was neither good nor ill intended. And the ſame may be ſaid when conſcience pronounces the action to be indifferent.

If, in the *ſecond* place, I do what my conſcience pronounces to be bad or dubious, I am guilty to myſelf, and juſtly deſerve the diſapprobation of others. Nor am I leſs guilty in this caſe, though what I judged to be bad ſhould happen to be good or indifferent. I did it believing it to be bad, and this is an immorality.

Laſtly, If I do what my conſcience pronounces to be right and my duty, either I have ſome regard to duty, or I have none. The laſt is not ſuppoſable; for I believe there is no man ſo abandoned, but that he does what he believes to be

be his duty, with more aſſurance and alacrity upon that account. The more weight the rectitude of the action has in determining me to do it, the more I approve of my own conduct. And if my wordly intereſt, my appetites or inclinations, draw me ſtrongly the contrary way, my following the dictates of my conſcience, in oppoſition to theſe motives, adds to the moral worth of the action.

When a man acts from an erroneous judgment, if his error be invincible, all agree that he is inculpable: But if his error be owing to ſome previous negligence or inattention, there ſeems to be ſome difference among moraliſts. This difference, however, is only ſeeming, and not real. For wherein lies the fault in this caſe? It muſt be granted by all, that the fault lies in this, and ſolely in this, that he was not at due pains to have his judgment well informed. Thoſe moraliſts, therefore, who conſider the action and the previous conduct that led to it as one whole, find ſomething to blame in the whole; and they do ſo moſt juſtly. But thoſe who take this whole to pieces, and conſider what is blameable and what is right in each part, find all that is blameable in what preceded this wrong judgment, and nothing but what is approvable in what followed it.

Let us ſuppoſe, for inſtance, that a man believes that GOD has indiſpenſably required him to obſerve a very rigorous faſt in Lent; and that, from

from a regard to this ſuppoſed Divine command, he faſts in ſuch manner as is not only a great mortification to his appetite, but even hurtful to his health.

His ſuperſtitious opinion may be the effect of a culpable negligence, for which he can by no means be juſtified. Let him, therefore, bear all the blame upon this account that he deſerves. But now, having this opinion fixed in his mind, ſhall he act according to it or againſt it? Surely we cannot hesitate a moment in this caſe. It is evident, that in following the light of his judgment, he acts the part of a good and pious man; whereas, in acting contrary to his judgment, he would be guilty of wilful diſobedience to his Maker.

If my ſervant, by miſtaking my orders, does the contrary of what I commanded, believing, at the ſame time, that he obeys my orders, there may be ſome fault in his miſtake, but to charge him with the crime of diſobedience, would be inhuman and unjuſt.

Theſe determinations appear to me to have intuitive evidence, no leſs than that of mathematical axioms. A man who is come to years of underſtanding, and who has exerciſed his faculties in judging of right and wrong, ſees their truth as he ſees day-light. Metaphyſical arguments brought againſt them have the ſame effect as when brought againſt the evidence of ſenſe; they may puzzle and confound, but they do not convince.

convince. It appears evident, therefore, that thoſe actions only can truly be called virtuous, or deſerving of moral approbation, which the agent believed to be right, and to which he was influenced, more or leſs, by that belief.

If it ſhould be objected, That this principle makes it to be of no conſequence to a man's morals, what his opinions may be, providing he acts agreeably to them, the anſwer is eaſy.

Morality requires, not only that a man ſhould act according to his judgment, but that he ſhould uſe the beſt means in his power that his judgment be according to truth. If he fail in either of theſe points, he is worthy of blame; but, if he fail in neither, I ſee not wherein he can be blamed.

When a man muſt act, and has no longer time to deliberate, he ought to act according to the light of his conſcience, even when he is in an error. But, when he has time to deliberate, he ought ſurely to uſe all the means in his power to be rightly informed. When he has done ſo, he may ſtill be in an error; but it is an invincible error, and cannot juſtly be imputed to him as a fault.

A *ſecond* objection is, That we immediately approve of benevolence, gratitude, and other primary virtues, without inquiring whether they are practiſed from a perſuaſion that they are our duty. And the laws of God place the ſum of virtue in loving God and our neighbour, without any

any proviſion that we do it from a perſuaſion that we ought to do ſo.

The anſwer to this objection is, That the love of GOD, the love of our neighbour, juſtice, gratitude, and other primary virtues, are, by the conſtitution of human nature, neceſſarily accompanied with a conviction of their being morally good. We may therefore ſafely preſume, that theſe things are never disjoined, and that every man who practices theſe virtues does it with a good conſcience. In judging of mens conduct, we do not ſuppoſe things which cannot happen, nor do the laws of God give deciſions upon impoſſible caſes, as they muſt have done, if they ſuppoſed the caſe of a man who thought it contrary to his duty to love GOD or to love mankind.

But if we wiſh to know how the laws of GOD determine the point in queſtion, we ought to obſerve their deciſion with regard to ſuch actions as may appear good to one man and ill to another. And here the deciſions of ſcripture are clear: *Let every man be perſuaded in his own mind. He that doubteth is condemned if he eat, becauſe he eateth not of faith, for whatſoever is not of faith is ſin. To him that eſteemeth any thing to be unclean, it is unclean.* The ſcripture often placeth the ſum of virtue in *living in all good conſcience*, in acting ſo *that our hearts condemn us not.*

The

The laſt objection I ſhall mention is a metaphyſical one urged by Mr HUME.

It is a favourite point in his ſyſtem of morals, That juſtice is not a natural but an artificial virtue. To prove this, he has exerted the whole ſtrength of his reaſon and eloquence. And as the principle we are conſidering ſtood in his way, he takes pains to refute it.

"Suppoſe," ſays he, "a perſon to have lent me "a ſum of money, on condition that it be reſto- "red in a few days. After the expiration of "the term he demands the ſum. I aſk, what "reaſon or motive have I to reſtore the money? "It will perhaps be ſaid, That my regard to ju- "ſtice, and abhorrence of villany and knavery, "are ſufficient reaſons for me." And this, he acknowledges, would be a ſatisfactory anſwer to a man in a civilized ſtate, and when trained up according to a certain diſcipline and education. "But in his rude and more natural condition," ſays he, "if you are pleaſed to call ſuch a con- "dition natural, this anſwer would be rejected "as perfectly unintelligible and ſophiſtical.

"For wherein conſiſts this honeſty and ju- "ſtice? Not ſurely in the external action. It "muſt, therefore, conſiſt in the motive from "which the external action is derived. This "motive can never be a regard to the honeſty "of the action. For it is a plain fallacy to ſay, "That a virtuous motive is requiſite to render "an action honeſt, and, at the ſame time, that

"a

" a regard to the honeſty is the motive to the " action. We can never have a regard to the " virtue of an action, unleſs the action be ante- " cedently virtuous."

And, in another place, " To ſuppoſe that the " mere regard to the virtue of the action is that " which rendered it virtuous, is to reaſon in a " circle. An action muſt be virtuous, before " we can have a regard to its virtue. Some vir- " tuous motive, therefore, muſt be antecedent " to that regard. Nor is this merely a metaphy- " ſical ſubtilty," &c. *Treatiſe of Hum. Nature, book* 3. *part* 2. *ſect.* 1.

I am not to conſider at this time, how this reaſoning is applied to ſupport the author's opinion, That juſtice is not a natural but an artificial virtue. I conſider it only as far as it oppoſes the principle I have been endeavouring to eſtabliſh, That, to render an action truly virtuous, the agent muſt have ſome regard to its rectitude. And I conceive the whole force of the reaſoning amounts to this:

When we judge an action to be good or bad, it muſt have been ſo in its own nature antecedent to that judgment, otherwiſe the judgment is erroneous. If, therefore, the action be good in its nature, the judgment of the agent cannot make it bad, nor can his judgment make it good, if, in its nature, it be bad. For this would be to aſcribe to our judgment a ſtrange magical power to transform the nature of things, and to

ſay,

ſay, that my judging a thing to be what it is not, makes it really to be what I erroneouſly judge it to be. This, I think, is the objection in its full ſtrength. And, in anſwer to it,

Firſt, If we could not looſe this metaphyſical knot, I think we might fairly and honeſtly cut it, becauſe it fixes an abſurdity upon the cleareſt and moſt indiſputable principles of morals and of common ſenſe. For I appeal to any man whether there be any principle of morality, or any principle of common ſenſe, more clear and indiſputable than that which we juſt now quoted from the Apoſtle PAUL, That although a thing be not unclean in itſelf, yet to him that eſteemeth it to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But the metaphyſical argument makes this abſurd. For, ſays the metaphyſician, If the thing was not unclean in itſelf, you judged wrong in eſteeming it to be unclean; and what can be more abſurd, than that your eſteeming a thing to be what it is not, ſhould make it what you erroneouſly eſteem it to be?

Let us try the edge of this argument in another inſtance. Nothing is more evident, than that an action does not merit the name of benevolent, unleſs it be done from a belief that it tends to promote the good of our neighbour. But this is abſurd, ſays the metaphyſician. For, if it be not a benevolent action in itſelf, your belief of its tendency cannot change its nature. It is abſurd, that your erroneous belief ſhould

make the action to be what you believe it to be. Nothing is more evident, than that a man who tells the truth, believing it to be a lie, is guilty of falſehood; but the metaphyſician would make this to be abſurd.

In a word, if there be any ſtrength in this argument, it would follow, That a man might be, in the higheſt degree, virtuous, without the leaſt regard to virtue; that he might be very benevolent, without ever intending to do a good office; very malicious, without ever intending any hurt; very revengeful, without ever intending to retaliate an injury; very grateful, without ever intending to return a benefit; and a man of ſtrict veracity, with an intention to lie. We might, therefore, reject this reaſoning, as repugnant to ſelf-evident truths, though we were not able to point out the fallacy of it.

2. But let us try, in the *ſecond* place, whether the fallacy of this argument may not be diſcovered.

We aſcribe moral goodneſs to actions conſidered abſtractly, without any relation to the agent. We likewiſe aſcribe moral goodneſs to an agent on account of an action he has done; we call it a good action, though, in this caſe, the goodneſs is properly in the man, and is only by a figure aſcribed to the action. Now, it is to be conſidered, whether *moral goodneſs*, when applied to an action conſidered abſtractly, has the ſame meaning as when we apply it to a man on account

account of that action; or whether we do not unawares change the meaning of the word, according as we apply it to the one or to the other.

The action, conſidered abſtractly, has neither underſtanding nor will; it is not accountable, nor can it be under any moral obligation. But all theſe things are eſſential to that moral goodneſs which belongs to a man; for, if a man had not underſtanding and will, he could have no moral goodneſs. Hence it follows neceſſarily, that the moral goodneſs which we aſcribe to an action conſidered abſtractly, and that which we aſcribe to a perſon for doing that action, are not the ſame. The meaning of the word is changed when it is applied to theſe different ſubjects.

This will be more evident, when we conſider what is meant by the moral goodneſs which we aſcribe to a man for doing an action, and what by the goodneſs which belongs to the action conſidered abſtractly. A good action in a man is that in which he applied his intellectual powers properly, in order to judge what he ought to do, and acted according to his beſt judgment. This is all that can be required of a moral agent; and in this his moral goodneſs, in any good action, conſiſts. But is this the goodneſs which we aſcribe to an action conſidered abſtractly? No, ſurely. For the action, conſidered abſtractly, is neither endowed with judgment nor with active power; and, therefore,

can have none of that goodneſs which we aſcribe to the man for doing it.

But what do we mean by goodneſs in an action conſidered abſtractly? To me it appears to lie in this, and in this only, That it is an action which ought to be done by thoſe who have the power and opportunity, and the capacity of perceiving their obligation to do it. I would gladly know of any man, what other moral goodneſs can be in an action conſidered abſtractly. And this goodneſs is inherent in its nature, and inſeparable from it. No opinion or judgment of an agent can in the leaſt alter its nature.

Suppoſe the action to be that of relieving an innocent perſon out of great diſtreſs. This ſurely has all the moral goodneſs that an action conſidered abſtractly can have. Yet it is evident, that an agent, in relieving a perſon in diſtreſs, may have no moral goodneſs, may have great merit, or may have great demerit.

Suppoſe, *firſt*, That mice cut the cords which bound the diſtreſſed perſon, and ſo bring him relief. Is there moral goodneſs in this act of the mice?

Suppoſe, *ſecondly*, That a man maliciouſly relieves the diſtreſſed perſon, in order to plunge him into greater diſtreſs. In this action there is ſurely no moral goodneſs, but much malice and inhumanity.

If, in the *laſt* place, we ſuppoſe a perſon, from real ſympathy and humanity, to bring relief to the

the diſtreſſed perſon, with conſiderable expence or danger to himſelf; here is an action of real worth, which every heart approves and every tongue praiſes. But wherein lies the worth? Not in the action conſidered by itſelf, which was common to all the three, but in the man who, on this occaſion, acted the part which became a good man. He did what his heart approved, and therefore he is approved by God and man.

Upon the whole, if we diſtinguiſh between that goodneſs which may be aſcribed to an action conſidered by itſelf, and that goodneſs which we aſcribe to a man when he puts it in execution, we ſhall find a key to this metaphyſical lock. We admit, that the goodneſs of an action, conſidered abſtractly, can have no dependence upon the opinion or belief of an agent, any more than the truth of a propoſition depends upon our believing it to be true. But, when a man exerts his active power well or ill, there is a moral goodneſs or turpitude which we figuratively impute to the action, but which is truly and properly imputable to the man only; and this goodneſs or turpitude depends very much upon the intention of the agent, and the opinion he had of his action.

This diſtinction has been underſtood in all ages by thoſe who gave any attention to morals, though it has been variouſly expreſſed. The Greek moraliſts gave the name of καθῆκον to an action good in itſelf; ſuch an action might be

done by the moſt worthleſs. But an action done with a right intention, which implies real worth in the agent, they called κατόρθωμα. The diſtinction is explained by CICERO in his Offices. He calls the firſt *officium medium*, and the ſecond *officium perfectum*, or *rectum*. In the ſcholaſtic ages, an action good in itſelf was ſaid to be *materially* good, and an action done with a right intention was called *formally* good. This laſt way of expreſſing the diſtinction is ſtill familiar among Theologians; but Mr HUME ſeems not to have attended to it, or to have thought it to be words without any meaning.

Mr HUME, in the ſection already quoted, tells us with great aſſurance, "In ſhort, it may be "eſtabliſhed as an undoubted maxim, that no "action can be virtuous or morally good, unleſs "there be in human nature ſome motive to "produce it diſtinct from the ſenſe of its mo-"rality." And upon this maxim he founds many of his reaſonings on the ſubject of morals.

Whether it be conſiſtent with Mr HUME's own ſyſtem, that an action may be produced merely from the ſenſe of its morality, without any motive of agreeableneſs or utility, I ſhall not now inquire. But, if it be true, and I think it evident to every man of common underſtanding, that a judge or an arbiter acts the moſt virtuous part when his ſentence is produced by no other motive but a regard to juſtice and a good conſcience, nay, when all other motives diſtinct from

from this are on the other ſide: If this I ſay be true, then that undoubted maxim of Mr HUME muſt be falſe, and all the concluſions built upon it muſt fall to the ground.

From the principle I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh, I think ſome conſequences may be drawn with regard to the theory of morals.

Firſt, If there be no virtue without the belief that what we do is right, it follows, That a moral faculty, that is, a power of diſcerning moral goodneſs and turpitude in human conduct, is eſſential to every being capable of virtue or vice. A being who has no more conception of moral goodneſs and baſeneſs, of right and wrong, than a blind man hath of colours, can have no regard to it in his conduct, and therefore can neither be virtuous nor vicious.

He may have qualities that are agreeable or diſagreeable, uſeful or hurtful, ſo may a plant or a machine. And we ſometimes uſe the word *virtue* in ſuch a latitude, as to ſignify any agreeable or uſeful quality, as when we ſpeak of the virtues of plants. But we are now ſpeaking of virtue in the ſtrict and proper ſenſe, as it ſignifies that quality in a man which is the object of moral approbation.

This virtue a man could not have, if he had not a power of diſcerning a right and a wrong in human conduct, and of being influenced by that diſcernment. For in ſo far only he is virtuous as he is guided in his conduct by that part

of his conſtitution. Brutes do not appear to have any ſuch power, and therefore are not moral or accountable agents. They are capable of culture and diſcipline, but not of virtuous or criminal conduct. Even human creatures, in infancy and non-age, are not moral agents, becauſe their moral faculty is not yet unfolded. Theſe ſentiments are ſupported by the common ſenſe of mankind, which has always determined, that neither brutes nor infants can be indicted for crimes.

It is of ſmall conſequence what name we give to this moral power of the human mind; but it is ſo important a part of our conſtitution, as to deſerve an appropriated name. The name of *conſcience*, as it is the moſt common, ſeems to me as proper as any that has been given it. I find no fault with the name *moral ſenſe*, although I conceive this name has given occaſion to ſome miſtakes concerning the nature of our moral power. Modern Philoſophers have conceived of the external ſenſes as having no other office but to give us certain ſenſations, or ſimple conceptions, which we could not have without them. And this notion has been applied to the moral ſenſe. But it ſeems to me a miſtaken notion in both. By the ſenſe of ſeeing, I not only have the conception of the different colours, but I perceive one body to be of this colour, another of that. In like manner, by my moral ſenſe, I not only have the conceptions of right and wrong

in conduct, but I perceive *this* conduct to be right, *that* to be wrong, and *that* indifferent. All our ſenſes are judging faculties, ſo alſo is conſcience. Nor is this power only a judge of our own actions and thoſe of others, it is likewiſe a principle of action in all good men; and ſo far only can our conduct be denominated virtuous, as it is influenced by this principle.

A *ſecond* conſequence from the principle laid down in this chapter is, That the formal nature and eſſence of that virtue which is the object of moral approbation conſiſts neither in a prudent proſecution of our private intereſt, nor in benevolent affections towards others, nor in qualities uſeful or agreeable to ourſelves or to others, nor in ſympathizing with the paſſions and affections of others, and in attuning our own conduct to the tone of other mens paſſions; but it conſiſts in living in all good conſcience, that is, in uſing the beſt means in our power to know our duty, and acting accordingly.

Prudence is a virtue, benevolence is a virtue, fortitude is a virtue; but the eſſence and formal nature of virtue muſt lie in ſomething that is common to all theſe, and to every other virtue. And this I conceive can be nothing elſe but the rectitude of ſuch conduct and turpitude of the contrary, which is diſcerned by a good man. And ſo far only he is virtuous as he purſues the former and avoids the latter.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Whether Juſtice be a Natural or an Artificial Virtue.

MR HUME's philoſophy concerning morals was firſt preſented to the world in the third volume of his *Treatiſe of Human Nature*, in the year 1740; afterwards in his *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, which was firſt publiſhed by itſelf, and then in ſeveral editions of his *Eſſays and Treatiſes*.

In theſe two works on morals the ſyſtem is the ſame. A more popular arrangement, great embelliſhment, and the omiſſion of ſome metaphyſical reaſonings, have given a preference in the public eſteem to the laſt; but I find neither any new principles in it, nor any new arguments in ſupport of the ſyſtem common to both.

In this ſyſtem, the proper object of moral approbation is not actions or any voluntary exertion, but qualities of mind; that is, natural affections or paſſions, which are involuntary, a part of the conſtitution of the man, and common to us with many brute-animals. When we praiſe or blame any voluntary action, it is only conſidered as a ſign of the natural affection from which it flows, and from which all its merit or demerit is derived.

Moral

Moral approbation or diſapprobation is not an act of the judgment, which, like all acts of judgment, muſt be true or falſe, it is only a certain feeling, which, from the conſtitution of human nature, ariſes upon contemplating certain characters or qualities of mind coolly and impartially.

This feeling, when agreeable, is moral approbation; when diſagreeable, diſapprobation. The qualities of mind which produce this agreeable feeling are the moral virtues, and thoſe that produce the diſagreeable, the vices.

Theſe preliminaries being granted, the queſtion about the foundation of morals is reduced to a ſimple queſtion of fact, viz. What are the qualities of mind which produce, in the diſintereſted obſerver, the feeling of approbation, or the contrary feeling?

In anſwer to this queſtion, the author endeavours to prove, by a very copious induction, That all perſonal merit, all virtue, all that is the object of moral approbation, conſiſts in the qualities of mind which are *agreeable* or *uſeful* to the perſon who poſſeſſes them, or to others.

The *dulce* and the *utile* is the whole ſum of merit in every character, in every quality of mind, and in every action of life. There is no room left for that *honeſtum* which CICERO thus defines, *Honeſtum igitur id intelligimus, quod tale eſt, ut detracta omni utilitate, ſine ullis premiis fructibuſve, per ſe ipſum poſſit jure laudari.*

Among

Among the ancient moraliſts, the Epicureans were the only ſect who denied that there is any ſuch thing as *honeſtum*, or moral worth, diſtinct from pleaſure. In this Mr HUME's ſyſtem agrees with theirs. For the addition of utility to pleaſure, as a foundation of morals, makes only a verbal, but no real difference. What is uſeful only has no value in itſelf, but derives all its merit from the end for which it is uſeful. That end, in this ſyſtem, is agreeableneſs or pleaſure. So that, in both ſyſtems, pleaſure is the only end, the only thing that is good in itſelf, and deſirable for its own ſake; and virtue derives all its merit from its tendency to produce pleaſure.

Agreeableneſs and utility are not moral conceptions, nor have they any connection with morality. What a man does, merely becauſe it is agreeable, or uſeful to procure what is agreeable, is not virtue. Therefore the Epicurean ſyſtem was juſtly thought by CICERO, and the beſt moraliſts among the ancients, to ſubvert morality, and to ſubſtitute another principle in its room; and this ſyſtem is liable to the ſame cenſure.

In one thing, however, it differs remarkably from that of EPICURUS. It allows, that there are diſintereſted affections in human nature; that the love of children and relations, friendſhip, gratitude, compaſſion and humanity, are not, as EPICURUS maintained, different modifi-

cations

cations of ſelf-love, but ſimple and original parts of the human conſtitution; that when intereſt, or envy, or revenge, pervert not our diſpoſition, we are inclined, from natural philanthropy, to deſire, and to be pleaſed with the happineſs of the human kind.

All this, in oppoſition to the Epicurean ſyſtem, Mr HUME maintains with great ſtrength of reaſon and eloquence, and, in this reſpect, his ſyſtem is more liberal and diſintereſted than that of the Greek Philoſopher. According to EPICURUS, virtue is whatever is agreeable to ourſelves. According to Mr HUME, every quality of mind that is agreeable or uſeful to ourſelves or to others.

This theory of the nature of virtue, it muſt be acknowledged, enlarges greatly the catalogue of moral virtues, by bringing into that catalogue every quality of mind that is uſeful or agreeable. Nor does there appear any good reaſon why the uſeful and agreeable qualities of body and of fortune, as well as thoſe of the mind, ſhould not have a place among moral virtues in this ſyſtem. They have the eſſence of virtue; that is, agreeableneſs and utility, why then ſhould they not have the name?

But, to compenſate this addition to the moral virtues, one claſs of them ſeems to be greatly degraded and deprived of all intrinſic merit. The uſeful virtues, as was above obſerved, are only miniſtering ſervants of the agreeable, and purveyors

purveyors for them; they muſt, therefore, be ſo far inferior in dignity, as hardly to deſerve the ſame name.

Mr HUME, however, gives the name of *virtue* to both; and to diſtinguiſh them, calls the agreeable qualities *natural* virtues, and the uſeful *artificial*.

The natural virtues are thoſe natural affections of the human conſtitution which give immediate pleaſure in their exerciſe. Such are all the benevolent affections. Nature diſpoſes to them, and from their own nature they are agreeable, both when we exerciſe them ourſelves, and when we contemplate their exerciſe in others.

The artificial virtues are ſuch as are eſteemed ſolely on account of their utility, either to promote the good of ſociety, as juſtice, fidelity, honour, veracity, allegiance, chaſtity; or on account of their utility to the poſſeſſor, as induſtry, diſcretion, frugality, ſecrecy, order, perſeverance, forethought, judgment, and others, of which, he ſays, many pages could not contain the catalogue.

This general view of Mr HUME's ſyſtem concerning the foundation of morals, ſeemed neceſſary, in order to underſtand diſtinctly the meaning of that principle of his, which is to be the ſubject of this chapter, and on which he has beſtowed much labour, to wit, that juſtice is not a natural but an artificial virtue.

This

This ſyſtem of the foundation of virtue is ſo contradictory in many of its eſſential points to the account we have before given of the active powers of human nature, that, if the one be true, the other muſt be falſe.

If GOD has given to man a power which we call *conſcience*, the *moral faculty*, the *ſenſe of duty*, by which, when he comes to years of underſtanding, he perceives certain things that depend on his will to be his duty, and other things to be baſe and unworthy; if the notion of duty be a ſimple conception, of its own kind, and of a different nature from the conceptions of utility and agreeableneſs, of intereſt or reputation; if this moral faculty be the prerogative of man, and no veſtige of it be found in brute-animals; if it be given us by GOD to regulate all our animal affections and paſſions; if to be governed by it be the glory of man and the image of GOD in his ſoul, and to diſregard its dictates be his diſhonour and depravity: I ſay, if theſe things be ſo, to ſeek the foundation of morality in the affections which we have in common with the brutes, is to ſeek the living among the dead, and to change the glory of man, and the image of GOD in his ſoul, into the ſimilitude of an ox that eateth graſs.

If virtue and vice be a matter of choice, they muſt conſiſt in voluntary actions, or in fixed purpoſes of acting according to a certain rule when

when there is opportunity, and not in qualities of mind which are involuntary.

It is true, that every virtue is both agreeable and uſeful in the higheſt degree; and that every quality that is agreeable or uſeful, has a merit upon that account. But virtue has a merit peculiar to itſelf, a merit which does not ariſe from its being uſeful or agreeable, but from its being virtue. This merit is diſcerned by the ſame faculty by which we diſcern it to be virtue, and by no other.

We give the name of *eſteem* both to the regard we have for things uſeful and agreeable, and to the regard we have for virtue; but theſe are different kinds of eſteem. I eſteem a man for his ingenuity and learning. I eſteem him for his moral worth. The ſound of *eſteem* in both theſe ſpeeches is the ſame, but its meaning is very different.

Good breeding is a very amiable quality; and even if I knew that the man had no motive to it but its pleaſure and utility to himſelf and others, I ſhould like it ſtill, but I would not in that caſe call it a moral virtue.

A dog has a tender concern for her puppies; ſo has a man for his children. The natural affection is the ſame in both, and is amiable in both. But why do we impute moral virtue to the man on account of this concern, and not to the dog? The reaſon ſurely is, That, in the man, the natural affection is accompanied with

a

a ſenſe of duty, but, in the dog, it is not. The ſame thing may be ſaid of all the kind affections common to us with the brutes. They are amiable qualities, but they are not moral virtues.

What has been ſaid relates to Mr HUME's ſyſtem in general. We are now to conſider his notion of the particular virtue of juſtice, that its merit conſiſts wholly in its utility to ſociety.

That juſtice is highly uſeful and neceſſary in ſociety, and, on that account, ought to be loved and eſteemed by all that love mankind, will readily be granted. And as juſtice is a ſocial virtue, it is true alſo, that there could be no exerciſe of it, and perhaps we ſhould have no conception of it, without ſociety. But this is equally true of the natural affections of benevolence, gratitude, friendſhip and compaſſion, which Mr HUME makes to be the natural virtues.

It may be granted to Mr HUME, that men have no conception of the virtue of juſtice till they have lived ſome time in ſociety. It is purely a moral conception, and our moral conceptions and moral judgments are not born with us. They grow up by degrees, as our reaſon does. Nor do I pretend to know how early, or in what order, we acquire the conception of the ſeveral virtues. The conception of juſtice ſuppoſes ſome exerciſe of the moral faculty, which, being the nobleſt part of the human conſtitution, and that to which all its other parts are ſubſervient, appears lateſt.

It may likewiſe be granted, that there is no animal affection in human nature that prompts us immediately to acts of juſtice, as ſuch. We have natural affections of the animal kind, which immediately prompt us to acts of kindneſs; but none, that I know, that has the ſame relation to juſtice. The very conception of juſtice ſuppoſes a moral faculty; but our natural kind affections do not; otherwiſe we muſt allow that brutes have this faculty.

What I maintain is, *firſt*, That when men come to the exerciſe of their moral faculty, they perceive a turpitude in injuſtice, as they do in other crimes, and conſequently an obligation to juſtice, abſtracting from the conſideration of its utility. And, *ſecondly*, That as ſoon as men have any rational conception of a favour, and of an injury, they muſt have the conception of juſtice, and perceive its obligation diſtinct from its utility.

The firſt of theſe points hardly admits of any other proof, but an appeal to the ſentiments of every honeſt man, and every man of honour, Whether his indignation is not immediately inflamed againſt an atrocious act of villany, without the cool conſideration of its diſtant conſequences upon the good of ſociety?

We might appeal even to robbers and pirates, Whether they have not had great ſtruggles with their conſcience, when they firſt reſolved to break through all the rules of juſtice? And whether,

whether, in a ſolitary and ſerious hour, they have not frequently felt the pangs of guilt? They have very often confeſſed this at a time when all diſguiſe is laid aſide.

The common good of ſociety, though a pleaſing object to all men, when preſented to their view, hardly ever enters into the thoughts of the far greateſt part of mankind; and, if a regard to it were the ſole motive to juſtice, the number of honeſt men muſt be ſmall indeed It would be confined to the higher ranks, who, by their education, or by their office, are led to make the public good an object; but that it is ſo confined, I believe no man will venture to affirm.

The temptations to injuſtice are ſtrongeſt in the loweſt claſs of men; and if nature had provided no motive to oppoſe thoſe temptations, but a ſenſe of public good, there would not be found an honeſt man in that claſs.

To all men that are not greatly corrupted, injuſtice, as well as cruelty and ingratitude, is an object of diſapprobation on its own account. There is a voice within us that proclaims it to be baſe, unworthy, and deſerving of puniſhment.

That there is, in all ingenuous natures, an antipathy to roguery and treachery, a reluctance to the thoughts of villany and baſeneſs, we have the teſtimony of Mr HUME himſelf; who, as I doubt not but he felt it, has expreſſed it very ſtrongly in the concluſion to his Enquiry, and

acknowledged that, in ſome caſes, without this reluctance and antipathy to diſhoneſty, a ſenſible knave would find no ſufficient motive from public good to be honeſt.

I ſhall give the paſſage at large from the Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals, ſection 9. near the end.

"Treating vice with the greateſt candour, "and making it all poſſible conceſſions, we "muſt acknowledge that there is not, in any "inſtance, the ſmalleſt pretext for giving it the "preference above virtue, with a view to ſelf-"intereſt; except, perhaps, in the caſe of ju-"ſtice, where a man, taking things in a certain "light, may often ſeem to be a loſer by his in-"tegrity. And though it is allowed that, "without a regard to property, no ſociety could "ſubſiſt; yet, according to the imperfect way "in which human affairs are conducted, a ſen-"ſible knave, in particular incidents, may think, "that an act of iniquity or infidelity will make "a conſiderable addition to his fortune, with-"out cauſing any conſiderable breach in the ſo-"cial union and confederacy. That *honeſty is* "*the beſt policy*, may be a good general rule, "but it is liable to many exceptions: And he, "it may perhaps be thought, conducts himſelf "with moſt wiſdom, who obſerves the general "rule, and takes advantage of all the excep-"tions.

"I

" I muſt confeſs that, if a man think that this " reaſoning much requires an anſwer, it will be a " little difficult to find any which will to him ap- " pear ſatisfactory and convincing. If his heart " rebel not againſt ſuch pernicious maxims, if he " feel no reluctance to the thoughts of villany " and baſeneſs, he has indeed loſt a conſiderable " motive to virtue, and we may expect that his " practice will be anſwerable to his ſpeculation. " But in all ingenuous natures, the antipathy to " treachery and roguery is too ſtrong to be " counterbalanced by any views of profit or pe- " cuniary advantage. Inward peace of mind, " conſciouſneſs of integrity, a ſatisfactory re- " view of our own conduct; theſe are circum- " ſtances very requiſite to happineſs, and will " be cheriſhed and cultivated by every honeſt " man who feels the importance of them."

The reaſoning of the *ſenſible knave* in this paſſage, ſeems to me to be juſtly founded upon the principles of the Enquiry and of the Treatiſe of Human Nature, and therefore it is no wonder, that the Author ſhould find it a little difficult to give any anſwer which would appear ſatisfactory and convincing to ſuch a man. To counterbalance this reaſoning, he puts in the other ſcale a reluctance, an antipathy, a rebellion of the heart againſt ſuch pernicious maxims, which is felt by ingenuous natures.

Let us conſider a little the force of Mr HUME's anſwer to this ſenſible knave, who rea-

ſons upon his own principles. I think it is either an acknowledgment, that there is a natural judgment of conſcience in man, that injuſtice and treachery is a baſe and unworthy practice, which is the point I would eſtabliſh; or it has no force to convince either the knave or an honeſt man.

A clear and intuitive judgment, reſulting from the conſtitution of human nature, is ſufficient to overbalance a train of ſubtile reaſoning on the other ſide. Thus, the teſtimony of our ſenſes is ſufficient to overbalance all the ſubtile arguments brought againſt their teſtimony. And, if there be a like teſtimony of conſcience in favour of honeſty, all the ſubtile reaſoning of the knave againſt it ought to be rejected without examination, as fallacious and ſophiſtical, becauſe it concludes againſt a ſelf-evident principle; juſt as we reject the ſubtile reaſoning of the metaphyſician againſt the evidence of ſenſe.

If, therefore, the *reluctance*, the *antipathy*, the *rebellion of the heart* againſt injuſtice, which Mr HUME ſets againſt the reaſoning of the knave, include in their meaning a natural intuitive judgment of conſcience, that injuſtice is baſe and unworthy, the reaſoning of the knave is convincingly anſwered; but the principle, *That juſtice is an artificial virtue, approved ſolely for its utility*, is given up.

If, on the other hand, the antipathy, reluctance and rebellion of heart, imply no judgment,

ment, but barely an uneaſy feeling, and that not natural, but acquired and artificial, the anſwer is indeed very agreeable to the principles of the *Enquiry*, but has no force to convince the knave, or any other man.

The knave is here ſuppoſed by Mr HUME to have no ſuch feelings, and therefore the anſwer does not touch his caſe in the leaſt, but leaves him in the full poſſeſſion of his reaſoning. And *ingenuous natures*, who have theſe feelings, are left to deliberate whether they will yield to acquired and artificial feelings, in oppoſition to rules of conduct, which, to their beſt judgment, appear wiſe and prudent.

The *ſecond* thing I propoſed to ſhew was, That, as ſoon as men have any rational conception of a favour and of an injury, they muſt have the conception of juſtice, and perceive its obligation.

The power with which the Author of nature hath endowed us, may be employed either to do good to our fellow-men, or to hurt them. When we employ our power to promote the good and happineſs of others, this is a benefit or favour; when we employ it to hurt them, it is an injury. Juſtice fills up the middle between theſe two. It is ſuch a conduct as does no injury to others; but it does not imply the doing them any favour.

The notions of a *favour* and of an *injury*, appear as early in the mind of man as any rational

notion whatever. They are diſcovered, not by language only, but by certain affections of mind, of which they are the natural objects. A favour naturally produces gratitude. An injury done to ourſelves produces reſentment; and even when done to another, it produces indignation.

I take it for granted that gratitude and reſentment are no leſs natural to the human mind than hunger and thirſt; and that thoſe affections are no leſs naturally excited by their proper objects and occaſions than theſe appetites.

It is no leſs evident, that the proper and formal object of gratitude is a perſon who has done us a favour; that of reſentment, a perſon who has done us an injury.

Before the uſe of reaſon, the diſtinction between a favour and an agreeable office is not perceived. Every action of another perſon which gives preſent pleaſure produces love and good will towards the agent. Every action that gives pain or uneaſineſs produces reſentment. This is common to man before the uſe of reaſon, and to the more ſagacious brutes; and it ſhews no conception of juſtice in either.

But, as we grow up to the uſe of reaſon, the notion, both of a favour and of an injury, grows more diſtinct and better defined. It is not enough that a good office be done; it muſt be done from good will, and with a good intention, otherwiſe

otherwiſe it is no favour, nor does it produce gratitude.

I have heard of a phyſician who gave ſpiders in a medicine to a dropſical patient, with an intention to poiſon him, and that this medicine cured the patient, contrary to the intention of the phyſician. Surely no gratitude, but reſentment, was due by the patient, when he knew the real ſtate of the caſe. It is evident to every man, that a benefit ariſing from the action of another, either without or againſt his intention, is not a motive to gratitude; that is, is no favour.

Another thing implied in the nature of a favour is, that it be not due. A man may ſave my credit by paying what he owes me. In this caſe, what he does tends to my benefit, and perhaps is done with that intention; but it is not a favour, it is no more than he was bound to do.

If a ſervant do his work, and receive his wages, there is no favour done on either part, nor any object of gratitude; becauſe, though each party has benefited the other, yet neither has done more than he was bound to do.

What I infer from this is, That the conception of a favour in every man come to years of underſtanding, implies the conception of things not due, and conſequently the conception of things that are due.

A negative cannot be conceived by one who has no conception of the correſpondent poſitive. Not to be due is the negative of being due; and he who conceives one of them muſt conceive both. The conception of things due and not due muſt therefore be found in every mind which has any rational conception of a favour, or any rational ſentiment of gratitude.

If we conſider, on the other hand, what an injury is which is the object of the natural paſſion of reſentment, every man, capable of reflection, perceives, that an injury implies more than being hurt. If I be hurt by a ſtone falling out of the wall, or by a flaſh of lightning, or by a convulſive and involuntary motion of another man's arm, no injury is done, no reſentment raiſed in a man that has reaſon. In this, as in all moral actions, there muſt be the will and intention of the agent to do the hurt.

Nor is this ſufficient to conſtitute an injury. The man who breaks my fences, or treads down my corn, when he cannot otherwiſe preſerve himſelf from deſtruction, who has no injurious intention, and is willing to indemnify me for the hurt which neceſſity, and not ill will, led him to do, is not injurious, nor is an object of reſentment.

The executioner who does his duty, in cutting off the head of a condemned criminal, is not an object of reſentment. He does nothing unjuſt, and therefore nothing injurious.

From

From this it is evident, that an injury, the object of the natural paſſion of reſentment, implies in it the notion of injuſtice. And it is no leſs evident, that no man can have a notion of injuſtice without having the notion of juſtice.

To ſum up what has been ſaid upon this point: A favour, an act of juſtice, and an injury, are ſo related to one another, that he who conceives one muſt conceive the other two. They lie, as it were, in one line, and reſemble the relations of greater, leſs and equal. If one underſtands what is meant by one line being greater or leſs than another, he can be at no loſs to underſtand what is meant by its being equal to the other; for, if it be neither greater nor leſs, it muſt be equal.

In like manner, of thoſe actions by which we profit or hurt other men, a favour is more than juſtice, an injury is leſs; and that which is neither a favour nor an injury is a juſt action.

As ſoon, therefore, as men come to have any proper notion of a favour and of an injury; as ſoon as they have any rational exerciſe of gratitude and of reſentment; ſo ſoon they muſt have the conception of juſtice and of injuſtice; and if gratitude and reſentment be natural to man, which Mr HUME allows, the notion of juſtice muſt be no leſs natural.

The notion of juſtice carries inſeparably along with it, a perception of its moral obligation. For to ſay that ſuch an action is an act of juſtice,

ſtice, that it is due, that it ought to be done, that we are under a moral obligation to do it, are only different ways of expreſſing the ſame thing. It is true, that we perceive no high degree of moral worth in a merely juſt action, when it is not oppoſed by intereſt or paſſion; but we perceive a high degree of turpitude and demerit in unjuſt actions, or in the omiſſion of what juſtice requires.

Indeed, if there were no other argument to prove, that the obligation of juſtice is not ſolely derived from its utility to procure what is agreeable either to ourſelves or to ſociety, this would be ſufficient, That the very conception of juſtice implies its obligation. The morality of juſtice is included in the very idea of it: Nor is it poſſible that the conception of juſtice can enter into the human mind, without carrying along with it the conception of duty and moral obligation. Its obligation, therefore, is inſeparable from its nature, and is not derived ſolely from its utility, either to ourſelves or to ſociety.

We may farther obſerve, That as in all moral eſtimation, every action takes its denomination from the motive that produces it; ſo no action can properly be denominated an act of juſtice, unleſs it be done from a regard to juſtice.

If a man pays his debt, only that he may not be caſt into priſon, he is not a juſt man, becauſe prudence,

prudence, and not juſtice, is his motive. And if a man, from benevolence and charity, gives to another what is really due to him, but what he believes not to be due, this is not an act of juſtice in him, but of charity or benevolence, becauſe it is not done from a motive of juſtice. Theſe are ſelf-evident truths; nor is it leſs evident, that what a man does, merely to procure ſomething agreeable, either to himſelf or to others, is not an act of juſtice, nor has the merit of juſtice.

Good muſic and good cookery have the merit of utility, in procuring what is agreeable both to ourſelves and to ſociety, but they never obtained among mankind the denomination of moral virtues. Indeed, if this author's ſyſtem be well founded, great injuſtice has been done them on that account.

I ſhall now make ſome obſervations upon the reaſoning of this author, in proof of his favourite principle, That juſtice is not a natural but an artificial virtue; or, as it is expreſſed in the *Enquiry*, That public utility is the ſole origin of juſtice, and that reflections on the beneficial conſequences of this virtue are the ſole foundation of its merit.

1. It muſt be acknowledged, that this principle has a neceſſary connection with his ſyſtem concerning the foundation of all virtue; and therefore it is no wonder that he hath taken

ſo

ſo much pains to ſupport it; for the whole ſyſtem muſt ſtand or fall with it.

If the *dulce* and the *utile*, that is, pleaſure, and what is uſeful to procure pleaſure, be the whole merit of virtue, juſtice can have no merit beyond its utility to procure pleaſure. If, on the other had, an intrinſic worth in juſtice, and demerit in injuſtice, be diſcerned by every man that hath a conſcience; if there be a natural principle in the conſtitution of man, by which juſtice is approved, and injuſtice diſapproved and condemned, then the whole of this laboured ſyſtem muſt fall to the ground.

2. We may obſerve, That as juſtice is directly oppoſed to injury, and as there are various ways in which a man may be injured, ſo there muſt be various branches of juſtice oppoſed to the different kinds of injury.

A man may be injured, *firſt*, in his perſon, by wounding, maiming or killing him; *ſecondly*, in his family, by robbing him of his children, or any way injuring thoſe he is bound to protect; *thirdly*, in his liberty, by confinement; *fourthly*, in his reputation; *fifthly*, in his goods or property; and, *laſtly*, in the violation of contracts or engagements made with him. This enumeration, whether complete or not, is ſufficient for the preſent purpoſe.

The different branches of juſtice, oppoſed to theſe different kinds of injury, are commonly expreſſed by ſaying, that an innocent man has

a

a right to the ſafety of his perſon and family, a right to his liberty and reputation, a right to his goods, and to fidelity to engagements made with him. To ſay that he has a right to theſe things, has preciſely the ſame meaning as to ſay, that juſtice requires that we ſhould be permitted to enjoy them, or that it is unjuſt to violate them. For injuſtice is the violation of right, and juſtice is, to yield to every man what is his right.

Theſe things being underſtood as the ſimpleſt and moſt common ways of expreſſing the various branches of juſtice, we are to conſider how far Mr HUME's reaſoning proves any or all of them to be artificial, or grounded ſolely upon public utility. The laſt of them, fidelity to engagements, is to be the ſubject of the next chapter, and therefore I ſhall ſay nothing of it in this.

The four firſt named, to wit, the right of an innocent man to the ſafety of his perſon and family, to his liberty and reputation, are, by the writers on juriſprudence, called *natural* rights of man, becauſe they are grounded in the nature of man as a rational and moral agent, and are, by his Creator, committed to his care and keeping. By being called *natural* or *innate*, they are diſtinguiſhed from acquired rights, which ſuppoſe ſome previous act or deed of man by which they are acquired, whereas natural rights ſuppoſe nothing of this kind.

When

When a man's natural rights are violated, he perceives intuitively, and he feels, that he is injured. The feeling of his heart ariſes from the judgment of his underſtanding; for if he did not believe that the hurt was intended, and unjuſtly intended, he would not have that feeling. He perceives that injury is done to himſelf, and that he has a right to redreſs. The natural principle of reſentment is rouſed by the view of its proper object, and excites him to defend his right. Even the injurious perſon is conſcious of his doing injury; he dreads a juſt retaliation; and if it be in the power of the injured perſon, he expects it as due and deſerved.

That theſe ſentiments ſpring up in the mind of man as naturally as his body grows to its proper ſtature; that they are not the birth of inſtruction, either of parents, prieſts, philoſophers or politicians, but the pure growth of nature, cannot, I think, without effrontery, be denied. We find them equally ſtrong in the moſt ſavage and in the moſt civilized tribes of mankind; and nothing can weaken them but an inveterate habit of rapine and bloodſhed, which benumbs the conſcience, and turns men into wild beaſts.

The public good is very properly conſidered by the judge who puniſhes a private injury, but ſeldom enters into the thought of the injured perſon. In all criminal law, the redreſs due to the private ſufferer is diſtinguiſhed from that which

which is due to the public; a diſtinction which could have no foundation, if the demerit of injuſtice aroſe ſolely from its hurting the public. And every man is conſcious of a ſpecific difference between the reſentment he feels for an injury done to himſelf, and his indignation againſt a wrong done to the public.

I think, therefore, it is evident, that, of the ſix branches of juſtice we mentioned, four are natural, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, being founded upon the conſtitution of man, and antecedent to all deeds and conventions of ſociety; ſo that, if there were but two men upon the earth, one might be unjuſt and injurious, and the other injured.

But does Mr HUME maintain the contrary?

To this queſtion I anſwer, That his doctrine ſeems to imply it, but I hope he meant it not.

He affirms in general, that juſtice is not a natural virtue; that it derives its origin ſolely from public utility, and that reflections on the beneficial conſequences of this virtue are the ſole foundation of its merit. He mentions no particular branch of juſtice as an exception to this general rule; yet juſtice, in common language, and in all the writers on juriſprudence I am acquainted with, comprehends the four branches above mentioned. His doctrine, therefore, according to the common conſtruction of words, extends to theſe four, as well as to the two other branches of juſtice.

On the other hand, if we attend to his long and laboured proof of this doctrine, it appears evident, that he had in his eye only two particular branches of juſtice. No part of his reaſoning applies to the other four. He ſeems, I know not why, to have taken up a confined notion of juſtice, and to have reſtricted it to a regard to property and fidelity in contracts. As to other branches he is ſilent. He nowhere ſays, that it is not naturally criminal to rob an innocent man of his life, of his children, of his liberty, or of his reputation; and I am apt to think he never meant it.

The only Philoſopher I know who has had the aſſurance to maintain this, is Mr HOBBES, who makes the ſtate of nature to be a ſtate of war, of every man againſt every man; and of ſuch a war in which every man has a right to do and to acquire whatever his power can, by any means, accompliſh; that is, a ſtate wherein neither right nor injury, juſtice nor injuſtice, can poſſibly exiſt.

Mr HUME mentions this ſyſtem of HOBBES, but without adopting it, though he allows it the authority of CICERO in its favour.

He ſays in a note, "This fiction of a ſtate of "nature as a ſtate of war was not firſt ſtarted "by Mr HOBBES, as is commonly imagined. "PLATO endeavours to refute an hypotheſis ve- "ry like it, in the 2d, 3d and 4th books, *De Re-* "*publica*. CICERO, on the contrary, ſuppoſes it "certain

" certain and univerſally acknowledged, in the " following paſſage, &c. *Pro Sextio, l.* 42."

The paſſage, which he quotes at large, from one of CICERO's Orations, ſeems to me to require ſome ſtraining to make it tally with the ſyſtem of Mr HOBBES. Be this as it may, Mr HUME might have added, That CICERO, in his Orations, like many other pleaders, ſometimes ſays, not what he believed, but what was fit to ſupport the cauſe of his client. That CICERO's opinion, with regard to the natural obligation of juſtice, was very different from that of Mr HOBBES, and even from Mr HUME's, is very well known.

3. As Mr HUME, therefore, has ſaid nothing to prove the four branches of juſtice which relate to the innate rights of men, to be artificial, or to derive their origin ſolely from public utility, I proceed to the fifth branch, which requires us not to invade another man's property.

The right of property is not innate, but acquired. It is not grounded upon the conſtitution of man, but upon his actions. Writers on juriſprudence have explained its origin in a manner that may ſatisfy every man of common underſtanding.

The earth is given to men in common for the purpoſes of life, by the bounty of Heaven. But, to divide it, and appropriate one part of its produce to one, another part to another, muſt

be the work of men who have power and underſtanding given them, by which every man may accommodate himſelf without hurt to any other.

This common right of every man to what the earth produces, before it be occupied and appropriated by others, was, by ancient moraliſts, very properly compared to the right which every citizen had to the public theatre, where every man that came might occupy an empty ſeat, and thereby acquire a right to it while the entertainment laſted; but no man had a right to diſpoſſeſs another.

The earth is a great theatre, furniſhed by the Almighty, with perfect wiſdom and goodneſs, for the entertainment and employment of all mankind. Here every man has a right to accommodate himſelf as a ſpectator, and to perform his part as an actor, but without hurt to others.

He who does ſo is a juſt man, and thereby entitled to ſome degree of moral approbation; and he who not only does no hurt, but employs his power to do good, is a good man, and is thereby entitled to a higher degree of moral approbation. But he who juſtles and moleſts his neighbour, who deprives him of any accommodation which his induſtry has provided without hurt to others, is unjuſt, and a proper object of reſentment.

It is true, therefore, that property has a beginning from the actions of men, occupying, and perhaps

perhaps improving, by their induſtry, what was common by nature. It is true alſo, that before property exiſts, that branch of juſtice and injuſtice which regards property cannot exiſt. But it is alſo true, that where there are men, there will very ſoon be property of one kind or another, and conſequently there will be that branch of juſtice which attends property as its guardian.

There are two kinds of property which we may diſtinguiſh.

The *firſt*, is what muſt preſently be conſumed to ſuſtain life; the *ſecond*, which is more permanent, is what may be laid up and ſtored for the ſupply of future wants.

Some of the gifts of nature muſt be uſed and conſumed by individuals for the daily ſupport of life; but they cannot be uſed till they be occupied and appropriated. If another perſon may, without injuſtice, rob me of what I have innocently occupied for preſent ſubſiſtence, the neceſſary conſequence muſt be, that he may, without injuſtice, take away my life.

A right to life implies a right to the neceſſary means of life. And that juſtice which forbids the taking away the life of an innocent man, forbids no leſs the taking from him the neceſſary means of life. He has the ſame right to defend the one as the other; and nature inſpires him with the ſame juſt reſentment of the one injury as of the other.

The natural right of liberty implies a right to ſuch innocent labour as a man chooſes, and to the fruit of that labour. To hinder another man's innocent labour, or to deprive him of the fruit of it, is an injuſtice of the ſame kind, and has the ſame effect as to put him in fetters or in priſon, and is equally a juſt object of reſentment.

Thus it appears, that ſome kind, or ſome degree, of property muſt exiſt wherever men exiſt, and that the right to ſuch property is the neceſſary conſequence of the natural right of men to life and liberty.

It has been further obſerved, that GOD has made man a ſagacious and provident animal, led by his conſtitution not only to occupy and uſe what nature has provided for the ſupply of his preſent wants and neceſſities, but to foreſee future wants and to provide for them; and that not only for himſelf, but for his family, his friends and connections.

He therefore acts in perfect conformity to his nature, when he ſtores, of the fruit of his labour, what may afterwards be uſeful to himſelf or to others; when he invents and fabricates utenſils or machines by which his labour may be facilitated, and its produce increaſed; and when, by exchanging with his fellow-men commodities or labour, he accommodates both himſelf and them. Theſe are the natural and innocent exertions of that underſtanding wherewith his Maker has endowed

endowed him. He has therefore a right to exerciſe them, and to enjoy the fruit of them. Every man who impedes him in making ſuch exertions, or deprives him of the fruit of them, is injurious and unjuſt, and an object of juſt reſentment.

Many brute-animals are led by inſtinct to provide for futurity, and to defend their ſtore, and their ſtore-houſe, againſt all invaders. There ſeems to be in man, before the uſe of reaſon, an inſtinct of the ſame kind. When reaſon and conſcience grow up, they approve and juſtify this provident care, and condemn, as unjuſt, every invaſion of others, that may fruſtrate it.

Two inſtances of this provident ſagacity ſeem to be peculiar to man. I mean the invention of utenſils and machines for facilitating labour, and the making exchanges with his fellow-men for mutual benefit. No tribe of men has been found ſo rude as not to practiſe theſe things in ſome degree. And I know no tribe of brutes that was ever obſerved to practiſe them. They neither invent nor uſe utenſils or machines, nor do they traffic by exchanges.

From theſe obſervations, I think it evident, that man, even in the ſtate of nature, by his powers of body and mind, may acquire permanent property, or what we call *riches*, by which his own and his family's wants are more liberally ſupplied, and his power enlarged to requite his benefactors, to relieve objects of com-

paſſion, to make friends, and to defend his property againſt unjuſt invaders. And we know from hiſtory, that men, who had no ſuperior on earth, no connection with any public beyond their own family, have acquired property, and had diſtinct notions of that juſtice and injuſtice, of which it is the object.

Every man, as a reaſonable creature, has a right to gratify his natural and innocent deſires without hurt to others. No deſire is more natural, or more reaſonable, than that of ſupplying his wants. When this is done without hurt to any man, to hinder or fruſtrate his innocent labour, is an unjuſt violation of his natural liberty. Private utility leads a man to deſire property, and to labour for it; and his right to it is only a right to labour for his own benefit.

That public utility is the ſole origin, even of that branch of juſtice which regards property, is ſo far from being true, that when men confederate and conſtitute a public, under laws and government, the right of each individual to his property is, by that confederation, abridged and limited. In the ſtate of nature every man's property was ſolely at his own diſpoſal, becauſe he had no ſuperior. In civil ſociety it muſt be ſubject to the laws of the ſociety. He gives up to the public part of that right which he had in the ſtate of nature, as the price of that protection and ſecurity which he receives from civil ſociety. In the ſtate of nature, he was ſole judge

judge in his own cauſe, and had right to defend his property, his liberty, and life, as far as his power reached. In the ſtate of civil ſociety, he muſt ſubmit to the judgment of the ſociety, and acquieſce in its ſentence, though he ſhould conceive it to be unjuſt.

What was ſaid above, of the natural right every man has to acquire permanent property, and to diſpoſe of it, muſt be underſtood with this condition, That no other man be thereby deprived of the neceſſary means of life. The right of an innocent man to the neceſſaries of life, is, in its nature, ſuperior to that which the rich man has to his riches, even though they be honeſtly acquired. The uſe of riches, or permanent property, is to ſupply future and caſual wants, which ought to yield to preſent and certain neceſſity.

As, in a family, juſtice requires that the children who are unable to labour, and thoſe who, by ſickneſs, are diſabled, ſhould have their neceſſities ſupplied out of the common ſtock, ſo, in the great family of GOD, of which all mankind are the children, juſtice, I think, as well as charity, requires, that the neceſſities of thoſe who, by the providence of GOD, are diſabled from ſupplying themſelves, ſhould be ſupplied from what might otherwiſe be ſtored for future wants.

From this it appears, That the right of acquiring and that of diſpoſing of property, may be

be ſubject to limitations and reſtrictions, even in the ſtate of nature, and much more in the ſtate of civil ſociety, in which the public has what writers in juriſprudence call an *eminent dominion* over the property, as well as over the lives of the ſubjects, as far as the public good requires.

If theſe principles be well founded, Mr HUME's arguments to prove that juſtice is an artificial virtue, or that its public utility is the ſole foundation of its merit, may be eaſily anſwered.

He ſuppoſes, *firſt*, a ſtate in which nature has beſtowed on the human race, ſuch abundance of external goods, that every man, without care or induſtry, finds himſelf provided of whatever he can wiſh or deſire. It is evident, ſays he, that in ſuch a ſtate, the cautious jealous virtue of juſtice would never once have been dreamed of.

It may be obſerved, *firſt*, That this argument applies only to one of the ſix branches of juſtice before mentioned. The other five are not in the leaſt affected by it; and the reader will eaſily perceive that this obſervation applies to almoſt all his arguments, ſo that it needs not be repeated.

Secondly, All that this argument proves is, That a ſtate of the human race may be conceived wherein no property exiſts, and where, of conſequence, there can be no exerciſe of that branch of juſtice which reſpects property. But does it follow from this, that where property exiſts,

iſts, and muſt exiſt, that no regard ought to be had to it?

He *next* ſuppoſes that the neceſſities of the human race continuing the ſame as at preſent, the mind is ſo enlarged with friendſhip and generoſity, that every man feels as much tenderneſs and concern for the intereſt of every man, as for his own. It ſeems evident, he ſays, that the uſe of juſtice would be ſuſpended by ſuch an extenſive benevolence, nor would the diviſions and barriers of property and obligation have ever been thought of.

I anſwer, the conduct which this extenſive benevolence leads to, is either perfectly conſiſtent with juſtice, or it is not. *Firſt*, If there be any caſe where this benevolence would lead us to do injuſtice, the uſe of juſtice is not ſuſpended. Its obligation is ſuperior to that of benevolence; and, to ſhew benevolence to one, at the expence of injuſtice to another, is immoral. *Secondly*, Suppoſing no ſuch caſe could happen, the uſe of juſtice would not be ſuſpended, becauſe by it we muſt diſtinguiſh good offices to which we had a right, from thoſe to which we had no right, and which therefore require a return of gratitude. *Thirdly*, Suppoſing the uſe of juſtice to be ſuſpended, as it muſt be in every caſe where it cannot be exerciſed, Will it follow, that its obligation is ſuſpended, where there is acceſs to exerciſe it?

A *third* ſuppoſition is, the reverſe of the firſt, That a ſociety falls into extreme want of the neceſſaries of life: The queſtion is put, Whether in ſuch a caſe, an equal partition of bread, without regard to private property, though effected by power, and even by violence, would be regarded as criminal and injurious? And the Author conceives, that this would be a ſuſpenſion of the ſtrict laws of juſtice.

I anſwer, That ſuch an equal partition as Mr HUME mentions, is ſo far from being criminal or injurious, that juſtice requires it; and ſurely that cannot be a ſuſpenſion of the laws of juſtice, which is an act of juſtice. All that the ſtricteſt juſtice requires in ſuch a caſe, is, That the man whoſe life is preſerved at the expence of another, and without his conſent, ſhould indemnify him when he is able. His caſe is ſimilar to that of a debtor who is inſolvent, without any fault on his part. Juſtice requires that he ſhould be forborn till he is able to pay. It is ſtrange that Mr HUME ſhould think that an action, neither criminal nor injurious, ſhould be a ſuſpenſion of the laws of juſtice. This ſeems to me a contradiction, for *juſtice* and *injury* are contradictory terms.

The *next* argument is thus expreſſed: "When "any man, even in political ſociety, renders "himſelf, by crimes, obnoxious to the public, "he is puniſhed in his goods and perſon; that "is, the ordinary rules of juſtice are, with re-

"gard

"gard to him, ſuſpended for a moment, and it "becomes equitable to inflict on him, what "otherwiſe he could not ſuffer without wrong "or injury."

This argument, like the former, refutes itſelf. For that an action ſhould be a ſuſpenſion of the rules of juſtice, and at the ſame time equitable, ſeems to me a contradiction. It is poſſible that equity may interfere with the letter of human laws, becauſe all the caſes that may fall under them, cannot be foreſeen; but that equity ſhould interfere with juſtice is impoſſible. It is ſtrange that Mr HUME ſhould think, that juſtice requires that a criminal ſhould be treated in the ſame way as an innocent man.

Another argument is taken from public war. What is it, ſays he, but a ſuſpenſion of juſtice among the warring parties? The laws of war, which then ſucceed to thoſe of equity and juſtice, are rules calculated for the advantage and utility of that particular ſtate in which men are now placed.

I anſwer, when war is undertaken for ſelf-defence, or for reparation of intolerable injuries, juſtice authoriſes it. The laws of war, which have been deſcribed by many judicious moraliſts, are all drawn from the fountain of juſtice and equity; and every thing contrary to juſtice, is contrary to the laws of war. That juſtice, which preſcribes one rule of conduct to a maſter, another to a ſervant; one to a parent, another

to

to a child; preſcribes alſo one rule of conduct towards a friend, another towards an enemy. I do not underſtand what Mr HUME means by the *advantage* and *utility* of a ſtate of war, for which he ſays the laws of war are calculated, and ſucceed to thoſe of juſtice and equity. I know no laws of war that are not calculated for juſtice and equity.

The *next* argument is this, were there a ſpecies of creatures intermingled with men, which, though rational, were poſſeſſed of ſuch inferior ſtrength, both of body and mind, that they were incapable of all reſiſtance, and could never, upon the higheſt provocation, make us feel the effects of their reſentment; the neceſſary conſequence, I think is, that we ſhould be bound, by the laws of humanity, to give gentle uſage to theſe creatures, but ſhould not, properly ſpeaking, lie under any reſtraint of juſtice with regard to them, nor could they poſſeſs any right or property, excluſive of ſuch arbitrary lords.

If Mr HUME had not owned this ſentiment as a conſequence of his Theory of Morals, I ſhould have thought it very uncharitable to impute it to him. However, we may judge of the Theory by its avowed conſequence. For there cannot be better evidence, that a theory of morals, or of any particular virtue, is falſe, than when it ſubverts the practical rules of morals. This defenceleſs ſpecies of rational creatures is doomed by Mr HUME to have no rights. Why? Becauſe

Becauſe they have no power to defend themſelves. Is not this to ſay, That right has its origin from power; which, indeed, was the doctrine of Mr HOBBES. And to illuſtrate this doctrine, Mr HUME adds, That as no inconvenience ever reſults from the exerciſe of a power, ſo firmly eſtabliſhed in nature, the reſtraints of juſtice and property being totally uſeleſs, could never have place in ſo unequal a confederacy; and, to the ſame purpoſe, he ſays, that the female part of our own ſpecies, owe the ſhare they have in the rights of ſociety, to the power which their addreſs and their charms give them. If this be ſound morals, Mr HUME's Theory of Juſtice may be true.

We may here obſerve, that though, in other places, Mr HUME founds the obligation of juſtice upon its utility to *ourſelves*, or to *others*, it is here founded ſolely upon utility to *ourſelves*. For ſurely to be treated with juſtice would be highly uſeful to the defenceleſs ſpecies he here ſuppoſes to exiſt. But as no inconvenience to ourſelves can ever reſult from our treatment of them, he concludes, that juſtice would be uſeleſs, and therefore can have no place. Mr HOBBES could have ſaid no more.

He ſuppoſes, in the *laſt* place, a ſtate of human nature, wherein all ſociety and intercourſe is cut off between man and man. It is evident, he ſays, that ſo ſolitary a being would be as much

much incapable of juſtice as of ſocial diſcourſe and converſation.

And would not ſo ſolitary a being be as incapable of friendſhip, generoſity and compaſſion, as of juſtice? If this argument prove juſtice to be an artificial virtue, it will, with equal force, prove every ſocial virtue to be artificial.

Theſe are the arguments which Mr HUME has advanced in his *Enquiry*, in the firſt part of a long ſection upon juſtice.

In the *ſecond* part, the arguments are not ſo clearly diſtinguiſhed, nor can they be eaſily collected. I ſhall offer ſome remarks upon what ſeems moſt ſpecious in this ſecond part.

He begins with obſerving, "That, if we examine the particular laws by which juſtice is directed and property determined, they preſent us with the ſame concluſion. The good of mankind is the only object of all thoſe laws and regulations."

It is not eaſy to perceive where the ſtreſs of this argument lies. *The good of mankind is the object of all the laws and regulations by which juſtice is directed and property determined; therefore juſtice is not a natural virtue, but has its origin ſolely from public utility, and its beneficial conſequences are the ſole foundation of its merit.*

Some ſtep ſeems to be wanting to connect the antecedent propoſition with the concluſion, which, I think, muſt be one or other of theſe two propoſitions; firſt, *All the rules of juſtice tend*

tend to public utility; or, ſecondly, *Public utility is the only ſtandard of juſtice, from which alone all its rules muſt be deduced.*

If the argument be, That juſtice muſt have its origin ſolely from public utility, becauſe all its rules tend to public utility, I cannot admit the conſequence; nor can Mr HUME admit it without overturning his own ſyſtem. For the rules of benevolence and humanity do all tend to the public utility, and yet in his ſyſtem, they have another foundation in human nature; ſo likewiſe may the rules of juſtice.

I am apt to think, therefore, that the argument is to be taken in the laſt ſenſe, That public utility is the only ſtandard of juſtice, from which all its rules muſt be deduced; and therefore juſtice has its origin ſolely from public utility.

This ſeems to be Mr HUME's meaning, becauſe, in what follows, he obſerves, That, in order to eſtabliſh laws for the regulation of property, we muſt be acquainted with the nature and ſituation of man; muſt reject appearances which may be falſe, though ſpecious; and muſt ſearch for thoſe rules which are, on the whole, moſt uſeful and beneficial; and endeavours to ſhew, that the eſtabliſhed rules which regard property are more for the public good, than the ſyſtem, either of thoſe religious fanatics of the laſt age, who held, that ſaints only ſhould inherit

rit the earth; or of thoſe political fanatics, who claimed an equal diviſion of property.

We ſee here, as before, that though Mr HUME's concluſion reſpects juſtice in general, his argument is confined to one branch of juſtice, to wit, the right of property; and it is well known, that, to conclude from a part to the whole, is not good reaſoning.

Beſides, the propoſition from which his concluſion is drawn, cannot be granted, either with regard to property, or with regard to the other branches of juſtice.

We endeavoured before to ſhow, that property, though not an innate but an acquired right, may be acquired in the ſtate of nature, and agreeably to the laws of nature; and that this right has not its origin from human laws, made for the public good, though, when men enter into political ſociety, it may and ought to be regulated by thoſe laws.

If there were but two men upon the face of the earth, of ripe faculties, each might have his own property, and might know his right to defend it, and his obligation not to invade the property of the other. He would have no need to have recourſe to reaſoning from public good, in order to know when he was injured, either in his property, or in any of his natural rights, or to know what rules of juſtice he ought to obſerve towards his neighbour.

The

The ſimple rule, of not doing to his neighbour what he would think wrong to be done to himſelf, would lead him to the knowledge of every branch of juſtice, without the conſideration of public good, or of laws and ſtatutes made to promote it.

It is not true, therefore, That public utility is the only ſtandard of juſtice, and that the rules of juſtice can be deduced only from their public utility.

ARISTIDES, and the people of Athens, had ſurely another notion of juſtice, when he pronounced the counſel of THEMISTOCLES, which was communicated to him only, to be highly uſeful, but unjuſt; and the aſſembly, upon this authority, rejected the propoſal unheard. Theſe honeſt citizens, though ſubject to no laws but of their own making, far from making utility the ſtandard of juſtice, made juſtice to be the ſtandard of utility.

"*What is a man's property?* Any thing which "it is lawful for him, and for him alone, to uſe. "*But what rule have we by which we can di-* "*ſtinguiſh theſe objects?* Here we muſt have re- "courſe to ſtatutes, cuſtoms, precedents, ana- "logies, &c."

Does not this imply, that, in the ſtate of nature, there can be no diſtinction of property? If ſo, Mr HUME's ſtate of nature is the ſame with that of Mr HOBBES.

It is true, that, when men become members of a political ſociety, they ſubject their property, as well as themſelves, to the laws, and muſt either acquieſce in what the laws determine, or leave the ſociety. But juſtice, and even that particular branch of it which our author always ſuppoſes to be the whole, is antecedent to political ſocieties and to their laws; and the intention of theſe laws is, to be the guardians of juſtice, and to redreſs injuries.

As all the works of men are imperfect, human laws may be unjuſt; which could never be, if juſtice had its origin from law, as the author ſeems here to inſinuate.

Juſtice requires, that a member of a ſtate ſhould ſubmit to the laws of the ſtate, when they require nothing unjuſt or impious. There may, therefore, be ſtatutory rights and ſtatutory crimes. A ſtatute may create a right which did not before exiſt, or make that to be criminal which was not ſo before. But this could never be, if there were not an antecedent obligation upon the ſubjects to obey the ſtatutes. In like manner, the command of a maſter may make that to be the ſervant's duty which, before, was not his duty, and the ſervant may be chargeable with injuſtice if he diſobeys, becauſe he was under an antecedent obligation to obey his maſter in lawful things.

We grant, therefore, that particular laws may direct juſtice and determine property, and ſometimes

times even upon very ſlight reaſons and analogies, or even for no other reaſon but that it is better that ſuch a point ſhould be determined by law than that it ſhould be left a dubious ſubject of contention. But this, far from preſenting us with the concluſion which the author would eſtabliſh, preſents us with a contrary concluſion. For all theſe particular laws and ſtatutes derive their whole obligation and force from a general rule of juſtice antecedent to them, to wit, That ſubjects ought to obey the laws of their country.

The author compares the rules of juſtice with the moſt frivolous ſuperſtitions, and can find no foundation for moral ſentiment in the one more than in the other, excepting that juſtice is requiſite to the well-being and exiſtence of ſociety.

It is very true, that, if we examine *mine* and *thine* by the *ſenſes of ſight, ſmell or touch, or ſcrutinize them by the ſciences of medicine, chemiſtry or phyſics*, we perceive no difference. But the reaſon is, that none of theſe ſenſes or ſciences are the judges of right or wrong, or can give any conception of them, any more than the ear of colour, or the eye of ſound. Every man of common underſtanding, and every ſavage, when he applies his moral faculty to thoſe objects, perceives a difference as clearly as he perceives daylight. When that ſenſe or faculty is not conſulted, in vain do we conſult every other, in a queſtion of right and wrong.

To perceive that juſtice tends to the good of mankind, would lay no moral obligation upon us to be juſt, unleſs we be conſcious of a moral obligation to do what tends to the good of mankind. If ſuch a moral obligation be admitted, why may we not admit a ſtronger obligation to do injury to no man? The laſt obligation is as eaſily conceived as the firſt, and there is as clear evidence of its exiſtence in human nature.

The laſt argument is a dilemma, and is thus expreſſed: "The dilemma ſeems obvious. As "juſtice evidently tends to promote public uti- "lity, and to ſupport civil ſociety, the ſentiment "of juſtice is either derived from our reflecting "on that tendency, or, like hunger, thirſt and "other appetites, reſentment, love of life, at- "tachment to offspring, and other paſſions, "ariſes from a ſimple original inſtinct in the "human breaſt, which nature has implanted for "like ſalutary purpoſes. If the latter be the "caſe, it follows, That property, which is the "object of juſtice, is alſo diſtinguiſhed by a "ſimple original inſtinct, and is not aſcertained "by any argument or reflection. But who is "there that ever heard of ſuch an inſtinct," &c.

I doubt not but Mr HUME has heard of a principle called *conſcience*, which nature has implanted in the human breaſt. Whether he will call it a ſimple original inſtinct, I know not, as he gives that name to all our appetites and to all

all our paſſions. From this principle, I think, we derive the ſentiment of juſtice.

As the eye not only gives us the conception of colours, but makes us perceive one body to have one colour, and another body another; and as our reaſon not only gives us the conception of true and falſe, but makes us perceive one propoſition to be true and another to be falſe; ſo our conſcience, or moral faculty, not only gives us the conception of honeſt and diſhoneſt, but makes us perceive one kind of conduct to be honeſt, another to be diſhoneſt. By this faculty we perceive a merit in honeſt conduct, and a demerit in diſhoneſt, without regard to public utility.

That theſe ſentiments are not the effect of education or of acquired habits, we have the ſame reaſon to conclude, as that our perception of what is true and what falſe, is not the effect of education or of acquired habits. There have been men who profeſſed to believe, that there is no ground to aſſent to any one propoſition rather than its contrary; but I never yet heard of a man who had the effrontery to profeſs himſelf to be under no obligation of honour or honeſty, of truth or juſtice, in his dealings with men.

Nor does this faculty of conſcience require *innate ideas of property, and of the various ways of acquiring and transferring it, or innate ideas of kings and ſenators, of pretors and chancellors and juries*, any more than the faculty of ſeeing requires innate ideas of colours, or than the facul-

ty of reaſoning requires innate ideas of cones, cylinders and ſpheres.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Nature and Obligation of a Contract.

THE obligation of contracts and promiſes is a matter ſo ſacred, and of ſuch conſequence to human ſociety, that ſpeculations which have a tendency to weaken that obligation, and to perplex mens notions on a ſubject ſo plain and ſo important, ought to meet with the diſapprobation of all honeſt men.

Some ſuch ſpeculations, I think, we have in the third volume of Mr HUME's Treatiſe of Human Nature, and in his Enquiry into the Principles of Morals; and my deſign in this chapter is, to offer ſome obſervations on the nature of a contract or promiſe, and on two paſſages of that author on this ſubject.

I am far from ſaying or thinking, that Mr HUME meant to weaken mens obligations to honeſty and fair dealing, or that he had not a ſenſe of theſe obligations himſelf. It is not the man I impeach, but his writings. Let us think of the firſt as charitably as we can, while we freely examine the import and tendency of the laſt.

Although the nature of a contract and of a promiſe is perfectly underſtood by all men of common

common underſtanding; yet, by attention to the operations of mind ſignified by theſe words, we ſhall be better enabled to judge of the metaphyſical ſubtilties which have been raiſed about them. A promiſe and a contract differ ſo little in what concerns the preſent diſquiſition, that the ſame reaſoning (as Mr HUME juſtly obſerves) extends to both. In a promiſe, one party only comes under the obligation, the other acquires a right to the preſtation promiſed. But we give the name of a contract to a tranſaction in which each party comes under an obligation to the other, and each reciprocally acquires a right to what is promiſed by the other.

The Latin word *pactum* ſeems to extend to both; and the definition given of it in the Civil Law, and borrowed from ULPIAN, is, '*Duorum pluriumve in idem placitum conſenſus.* TITIUS, a modern Civilian, has endeavoured to make this definition more complete, by adding the words, *Obligationis licitè conſtituendæ vel tollendæ cauſa datus.* With this addition the definition is, That a contract is the conſent of two or more perſons in the ſame thing, given with the intention of conſtituting or diſſolving lawfully ſome obligation.

This definition is perhaps as good as any other that can be given; yet, I believe, every man will acknowledge, that it gives him no clearer or more diſtinct notion of a contract than he had before. If it is conſidered as a ſtrictly logical

gical definition, I believe ſome objections might be made to it; but I forbear to mention them, becauſe I believe that ſimilar objections might be made to any definition of a contract that can be given.

Nor can it be inferred from this, that the notion of a contract is not perfectly clear in every man come to years of underſtanding. For this is common to many operations of the mind, that although we underſtand them perfectly, and are in no danger of confounding them with any thing elſe; yet we cannot define them according to the rules of logic, by a genus and a ſpecific difference. And when we attempt it, we rather darken than give light to them.

Is there any thing more diſtinctly underſtood by all men, than what it is to ſee, to hear, to remember, to judge? Yet it is the moſt difficult thing in the world to define theſe operations according to the rules of logical definition. But it is not more difficult than it is uſeleſs.

Sometimes Philoſophers attempt to define them; but, if we examine their definitions, we ſhall find, that they amount to no more than giving one ſynonymous word for another, and commonly a worſe for a better. So when we define a contract, by calling it a conſent, a convention, an agreement, what is this but giving a ſynonymous word for it, and a word that is neither more expreſſive nor better underſtood?

One

One boy has a top, another a ſcourge; ſays the firſt to the other, If you will lend me your ſcourge as long as I can keep up my top with it, you ſhall next have the top as long as you can keep it up. Agreed, ſays the other. This is a contract perfectly underſtood by both parties, though they never heard of the definition given by ULPIAN or by TITIUS. And each of them knows, that he is injured if the other breaks the bargain, and that he does wrong if he breaks it himſelf.

The operations of the human mind may be divided into two claſſes, the ſolitary and the ſocial. As promiſes and contracts belong to the laſt claſs, it may be proper to explain this diviſion.

I call thoſe operations *ſolitary*, which may be performed by a man in ſolitude, without intercourſe with any other intelligent being.

I call thoſe operations *ſocial*, which neceſſarily imply ſocial intercourſe with ſome other intelligent being who bears a part in them.

A man may ſee, and hear, and remember, and judge, and reaſon; he may deliberate and form purpoſes, and execute them, without the intervention of any other intelligent being. They are ſolitary acts. But when he aſks a queſtion for information, when he teſtifies a fact, when he gives a command to his ſervant, when he makes a promiſe, or enters into a contract, theſe are ſocial acts of mind, and can have no exiſtence

ence without the intervention of ſome other intelligent being, who acts a part in them. Between the operations of the mind, which, for want of a more proper name, I have called *ſolitary*, and thoſe I have called *ſocial*, there is this very remarkable diſtinction, that, in the ſolitary, the expreſſion of them by words, or any other ſenſible ſign, is accidental. They may exiſt, and be complete, without being expreſſed, without being known to any other perſon. But, in the ſocial operations, the expreſſion is eſſential. They cannot exiſt without being expreſſed by words or ſigns, and known to the other party.

If nature had not made man capable of ſuch ſocial operations of mind, and furniſhed him with a language to expreſs them, he might think, and reaſon, and deliberate, and will; he might have deſires and averſions, joy and ſorrow; in a word, he might exert all thoſe operations of mind, which the writers in logic and pneumatology have ſo copiouſly deſcribed; but, at the ſame time, he would ſtill be a ſolitary being, even when in a crowd; it would be impoſſible for him to put a queſtion, or give a command, to aſk a favour, or teſtify a fact, to make a promiſe or a bargain.

I take it to be the common opinion of Philoſophers, That the ſocial operations of the human mind are not ſpecifically different from the ſolitary, and that they are only various modifications

cations or compoſitions of our ſolitary operations, and may be reſolved into them.

It is, for this reaſon probably, that, in enumerating the operations of the mind, the ſolitary only are mentioned, and no notice at all taken of the ſocial, though they are familiar to every man, and have names in all languages.

I apprehend, however, it will be found extremely difficult, if not impoſſible, to reſolve our ſocial operations into any modification or compoſition of the ſolitary: And that an attempt to do this, would prove as ineffectual, as the attempts that have been made to reſolve all our ſocial affections into the ſelfiſh. The ſocial operations appear to be as ſimple in their nature as the ſolitary. They are found in every individual of the ſpecies, even before the uſe of reaſon.

The power which man has of holding ſocial intercourſe with his kind, by aſking and refuſing, threatening and ſupplicating, commanding and obeying, teſtifying and promiſing, muſt either be a diſtinct faculty given by our Maker, and a part of our conſtitution, like the powers of ſeeing, and hearing, or it muſt be a human invention. If men have invented this art of ſocial intercourſe, it muſt follow, that every individual of the ſpecies muſt have invented it for himſelf. It cannot be taught, for though when once carried to a certain pitch, it may be improved by teaching; yet it is impoſſible it can begin

begin in that way, becauſe all teaching ſuppoſes a ſocial intercourſe and language already eſtabliſhed between the teacher and the learner. This intercourſe muſt, from the very firſt, be carried on by ſenſible ſigns; for the thoughts of other men can be diſcovered in no other way. I think it is likewiſe evident, that this intercourſe, in its beginning at leaſt, muſt be carried on by natural ſigns, whoſe meaning is underſtood by both parties, previous to all compact or agreement. For there can be no compact without ſigns, nor without ſocial intercourſe.

I apprehend, therefore, that the ſocial intercourſe of mankind, conſiſting of thoſe ſocial operations which I have mentioned, is the exerciſe of a faculty appropriated to that purpoſe, which is the gift of GOD, no leſs than the powers of ſeeing and hearing. And that, in order to carry on this intercourſe, GOD has given to man a natural language, by which his ſocial operations are expreſſed, and, without which, the artificial languages of articulate ſounds, and of writing, could never have been invented by human art.

The ſigns in this natural language are looks, changes of the features, modulations of the voice, and geſtures of the body. All men underſtand this language without inſtruction, and all men can uſe it in ſome degree. But they are moſt expert in it who uſe it moſt. It makes a great part of the language of ſavages, and therefore

therefore they are more expert in the uſe of natural ſigns than the civilized.

The language of dumb perſons is moſtly formed of natural ſigns; and they are all great adepts in this language of nature. All that we call action and pronunciation, in the moſt perfect orator, and the moſt admired actor, is nothing elſe but ſuperadding the language of nature to the language of articulate ſounds. The pantomimes among the Romans carried it to the higheſt pitch of perfection. For they could act part of comedies and tragedies in dumb-ſhew, ſo as to be underſtood, not only by thoſe who were accuſtomed to this entertainment, but by all the ſtrangers that came to Rome, from all the corners of the earth.

For it may be obſerved of this natural language, (and nothing more clearly demonſtrates it to be a part of the human conſtitution,) that although it require practice and ſtudy to enable a man to expreſs his ſentiments by it in the moſt perfect manner; yet it requires neither ſtudy nor practice in the ſpectator to underſtand it. The knowledge of it was before latent in the mind, and we no ſooner ſee it, than we immediately recogniſe it, as we do an acquaintance whom we had long forgot, and could not have deſcribed; but no ſooner do we ſee him, than we know for certain that he is the very man.

This knowledge, in all mankind, of the natural ſigns of mens thoughts and ſentiments, is indeed

indeed ſo like to reminiſcence, that it ſeems to have led PLATO to conceive all human knowledge to be of that kind.

It is not by reaſoning, that all mankind know, that an open countenance, and a placid eye, is a ſign of amity; that a contracted brow, and a fierce look, is the ſign of anger. It is not from reaſon that we learn to know the natural ſigns of conſenting and refuſing, of affirming and denying, of threatening and ſupplicating.

No man can perceive any neceſſary connection between the ſigns of ſuch operations, and the things ſignified by them. But we are ſo formed by the Author of our nature, that the operations themſelves become viſible, as it were, by their natural ſigns. This knowledge reſembles reminiſcence, in this reſpect, that it is immediate. We form the concluſion with great aſſurance, without knowing any premiſes from which it may be drawn by reaſoning.

It would lead us too far from the intention of the preſent enquiry, to conſider more particularly, in what degree the ſocial intercourſe is natural, and a part of our conſtitution; how far it is of human invention.

It is ſufficient to obſerve, that this intercourſe of human minds, by which their thoughts and ſentiments are exchanged, and their ſouls mingle together as it were, is common to the whole ſpecies from infancy.

Like

Like our other powers, its firſt beginnings are weak, and ſcarcely perceptible. But, it is a certain fact, that we can perceive ſome communication of ſentiments between the nurſe and her nurſling, before it is a month old. And I doubt not, but that, if both had grown out of the earth, and had never ſeen another human face, they would be able in a few years to converſe together.

There appears indeed to be ſome degree of ſocial intercourſe among brute-animals, and between ſome of them and man. A dog exults in the careſſes of his maſter, and is humbled at his diſpleaſure. But there are two operations of the ſocial kind, of which the brute-animals ſeem to be altogether incapable. They can neither plight their veracity by teſtimony, nor their fidelity by any engagement or promiſe. If nature had made them capable of theſe operations, they would have had a language to expreſs them by, as man has: But of this we ſee no appearance.

A fox is ſaid to uſe ſtratagems, but he cannot lie; becauſe he cannot give his teſtimony, or plight his veracity. A dog is ſaid to be faithful to his maſter; but no more is meant but that he is affectionate, for he never came under any engagement. I ſee no evidence that any brute-animal is capable of either giving teſtimony, or making a promiſe.

A dumb man cannot ſpeak any more than a fox or a dog; but he can give his teſtimony by ſigns as early in life as other men can do by words. He knows what a lie is as early as other men, and hates it as much. He can plight his faith, and is ſenſible of the obligation of a promiſe or contract.

It is therefore a prerogative of man, that he can communicate his knowledge of facts by teſtimony, and enter into engagements by promiſe or contract. GOD has given him theſe powers by a part of his conſtitution, which diſtinguiſhes him from all brute-animals. And whether they are original powers, or reſolvable into other original powers, it is evident that they ſpring up in the human mind at an early period of life, and are found in every individual of the ſpecies, whether ſavage or civilized.

Theſe prerogative powers of man, like all his other powers, muſt be given for ſome end, and for a good end. And if we conſider a little farther the œconomy of nature, in relation to this part of the human conſtitution, we ſhall perceive the wiſdom of Nature in the ſtructure of it, and diſcover clearly our duty in conſequence of it.

It is evident, in the *firſt* place, that if no credit was given to teſtimony, if there was no reliance upon promiſes, they would anſwer no end at all, not even that of deceiving.

Secondly, Suppoſing men diſpoſed by ſome principle in their nature to rely on declarations and

and promiſes; yet if men found in experience, that there was no fidelity on the other part in making and in keeping them, no man of common underſtanding would truſt to them, and ſo they would become uſeleſs.

Hence it appears, *thirdly*, That this power of giving teſtimony, and of promiſing, can anſwer no end in ſociety, unleſs there be a conſiderable degree, both of fidelity on the one part, and of truſt on the other. Theſe two muſt ſtand or fall together, and one of them cannot poſſibly ſubſiſt without the other.

Fourthly, It may be obſerved, that fidelity in declarations and promiſes, and its counter-part, truſt and reliance upon them, form a ſyſtem of ſocial intercourſe, the moſt amiable, the moſt uſeful, that can be among men. Without fidelity and truſt, there can be no human ſociety. There never was a ſociety, even of ſavages, nay even of robbers or pirates, in which there was not a great degree of veracity and of fidelity among themſelves. Without it man would be the moſt diſſocial animal that GOD has made. His ſtate would be in reality what HOBBES conceived the ſtate of nature to be, a ſtate of war of every man againſt every man; nor could this war ever terminate in peace.

It may be obſerved, in the *fifth* place, that man is evidently made for living in ſociety. His ſocial affections ſhew this as evidently, as that the eye was made for ſeeing. His ſocial opera-

tions, particularly thoſe of teſtifying and promiſing, make it no leſs evident.

From theſe obſervations it follows, that if no proviſion were made by nature, to engage men to fidelity in declarations and promiſes, human nature would be a contradiction to itſelf, made for an end, yet without the neceſſary means of attaining it. As if the ſpecies had been furniſhed with good eyes, but without the power of opening their eye-lids. There are no blunders of this kind in the works of GOD. Wherever there is an end intended, the means are admirably fitted for the attainment of it; and ſo we find it to be in the caſe before us.

For we ſee that children, as ſoon as they are capable of underſtanding declarations and promiſes, are led by their conſtitution to rely upon them. They are no leſs led by conſtitution to veracity and candour, on their own part. Nor do they ever deviate from this road of truth and ſincerity, until corrupted by bad example and bad company. This diſpoſition to ſincerity in themſelves, and to give credit to others, whether we call it *inſtinct*, or whatever name we give it, muſt be conſidered as the effect of their conſtitution.

So that the things eſſential to human ſociety, I mean good faith on the one part, and truſt on the other, are formed by nature in the minds of children, before they are capable of knowing their

their utility, or being influenced by conſiderations either of duty or intereſt.

When we grow up ſo far as to have the conception of a right and a wrong in conduct, the turpitude of lying, falſehood, and diſhoneſty, is diſcerned, not by any train of reaſoning, but by an immediate perception. For we ſee that every man diſapproves it in others, even thoſe who are conſcious of it in themſelves.

Every man thinks himſelf injured and ill uſed, and feels reſentment, when he is impoſed upon by it. Every man takes it as a reproach when falſehood is imputed to him. Theſe are the cleareſt evidences, that all men diſapprove of falſehood, when their judgment is not biaſſed.

I know of no evidence that has been given of any nation ſo rude, as not to have theſe ſentiments. It is certain that dumb people have them, and diſcover them about the ſame period of life, in which they appear in thoſe who ſpeak. And it may reaſonably be thought, that dumb perſons, at that time of life, have had as little advantage, with regard to morals, from their education, as the greateſt ſavages.

Every man come to years of reflection, when he pledges his veracity or fidelity, thinks he has a right to be credited, and is affronted if he is not. But there cannot be a ſhadow of right to be credited, unleſs there be an obligation to good faith. For right on one hand, neceſſarily implies obligation on the other.

When we ſee that in the moſt ſavage ſtate, that ever was known of the human race, men have always lived in ſocieties greater or leſs, this of itſelf is a proof from fact, that they have had that ſenſe of their obligation to fidelity, without which no human ſociety can ſubſiſt.

From theſe obſervations, I think, it appears very evident, that as fidelity on one part, and truſt on the other, are eſſential to that intercourſe of men, which we call human ſociety; ſo the Author of our nature has made wiſe proviſion for perpetuating them among men, in that degree that is neceſſary to human ſociety, in all the different periods of human life, and in all the ſtages of human improvement and degeneracy.

In early years we have an innate diſpoſition to them. In riper years, we feel our obligation to fidelity as much as to any moral duty whatſoever.

Nor is it neceſſary to mention the collateral inducements to this virtue, from conſiderations of prudence, which are obvious to every man that reflects. Such as, that it creates truſt, the moſt effectual engine of human power; that it requires no artifice or concealment; dreads no detection; that it inſpires courage and magnanimity, and is the natural ally of every virtue; ſo that there is no virtue whatſoever, to which our natural obligation appears more ſtrong or more apparent.

An

An obſervation or two, with regard to the nature of a contract, will be ſufficient for the preſent purpoſe.

It is obvious that the preſtation promiſed muſt be underſtood by both parties. One party engages to do ſuch a thing, another accepts of this engagement. An engagement to do, one does not know what, can neither be made nor accepted. It is no leſs obvious, that a contract is a voluntary tranſaction.

But it ought to be obſerved, that the will, which is eſſential to a contract, is only a will to engage, or to become bound. We muſt beware of confounding this will, with a will to perform what we have engaged. The laſt can ſignify nothing elſe than an intention and fixed purpoſe to do what we have engaged to do. The will to become bound, and to confer a right upon the other party, is indeed the very eſſence of a contract; but the purpoſe of fulfilling our engagement, is no part of the contract at all.

A purpoſe is a ſolitary act of mind, which lays no obligation on the perſon, nor confers any right on another. A fraudulent perſon may contract with a fixed purpoſe of not performing his engagement. But this purpoſe makes no change with regard to his obligation. He is as much bound as the honeſt man, who contracts with a fixed purpoſe of performing.

As the contract is binding without any regard to the purpoſe, ſo there may be a purpoſe without any contract. A purpoſe is no contract, even

when it is declared to the perſon for whoſe benefit it is intended. I may ſay to a man, I intend to do ſuch a thing for your benefit, but I come under no engagement. Every man underſtands the meaning of this ſpeech, and ſees no contradiction in it: Whereas, if a purpoſe declared were the ſame thing with a contract, ſuch a ſpeech would be a contradiction, and would be the ſame as if one ſhould ſay, I promiſe to do ſuch a thing, but I do not promiſe.

All this is ſo plain to every man of common ſenſe, that it would have been unneceſſary to be mentioned, had not ſo acute a man as Mr HUME grounded ſome of the contradictions he finds in a contract, upon confounding a will to engage in a contract with a will or purpoſe to perform the engagement.

I come now to conſider the ſpeculations of that Author with regard to contracts.

In order to ſupport a favourite notion of his own, That juſtice is not a natural but an artificial virtue, and that it derives its whole merit from its utility, he has laid down ſome principles which, I think, have a tendency to ſubvert all faith and fair-dealing among mankind.

In the third volume of the Treatiſe of Human Nature, p. 40. he lays it down as an undoubted maxim, That no action can be virtuous or morally good, unleſs there be, in human nature, ſome motive to produce it, diſtinct from its morality. Let us apply this undoubted maxim in

an

an inſtance or two. If a man keeps his word, from this ſole motive, that he ought to do ſo, this is no virtuous or morally good action. If a man pays his debt, from this motive, that juſtice requires this of him, this is no virtuous or morally good action. If a judge or an arbiter gives a ſentence in a cauſe, from no other motive but regard to juſtice, this is no virtuous or morally good action. Theſe appear to me to be ſhocking abſurdities, which no metaphyſical ſubtilty can ever juſtify.

Nothing is more evident, than that every human action takes its denomination and its moral nature from the motive from which it is performed. That is a benevolent action, which is done from benevolence. That is an act of gratitude, which is done from a ſentiment of gratitude. That is an act of obedience to GOD, which is done from a regard to his command. And, in general, that is an act of virtue which is done from a regard to virtue.

Virtuous actions are ſo far from needing other motives, beſides their being virtuous, to give them merit, that their merit is then greateſt and moſt conſpicuous, when every motive that can be put in the oppoſite ſcale is outweighed by the ſole conſideration of their being our duty.

This maxim, therefore, of Mr HUME, That no action can be virtuous or morally good, unleſs there be ſome motive to produce it diſtinct from its morality, is ſo far from being undoubtedly

edly true, that it is undoubtedly falſe. It was never, ſo far as I know, maintained by any moraliſt, but by the Epicureans; and it ſavours of the very dregs of that ſect. It agrees well with the principles of thoſe who maintained, that virtue is an empty name, and that it is entitled to no regard, but in as far as it miniſters to pleaſure or profit.

I believe the author of this maxim acted upon better moral principles than he wrote; and that what CICERO ſays of EPICURUS, may be applied to him: *Redarguitur ipſe a ſeſe, vincunturque ſcripta ejus probitate ipſius et moribus, et ut alii exiſtimantur dicere melius quam facere, ſic ille mihi videtur facere melius quam dicere.*

But let us ſee how he applies this maxim to contracts. I give you his words from the place formerly cited. "I ſuppoſe," ſays he, "a perſon "to have lent me a ſum of money, on condition "that it be reſtored in a few days; and, after "the expiration of the term agreed on, he de"mands the ſum. I aſk, what reaſon or motive "have I to reſtore the money? It will perhaps "be ſaid, that my regard to juſtice and abhor"rence of villany and knavery, are ſufficient "reaſons for me, if I have the leaſt grain of ho"neſty, or ſenſe of duty and obligation. And "this anſwer, no doubt, is juſt and ſatisfactory "to man in his civilized ſtate, and when train"ed up according to a certain diſcipline and "education. But, in his rude and more natural "condition,

" condition, if you are pleaſed to call ſuch a " condition natural, this anſwer would be re- " jected as perfectly unintelligible and ſophiſti- " cal."

The doctrine we are taught in this paſſage is this, That though a man, in a civilized ſtate, and when trained up according to a certain diſcipline and education, may have a regard to juſtice, and an abhorrence of villany and knavery, and ſome ſenſe of duty and obligation; yet to a man in his rude and more natural condition, the conſiderations of honeſty, juſtice, duty and obligation, will be perfectly unintelligible and ſophiſtical. And this is brought as an argument to ſhew, that juſtice is not a natural but an artificial virtue.

I ſhall offer ſome obſervations on this argument.

1. Although it may be true, that what is unintelligible to man in his rude ſtate may be intelligible to him in his civilized ſtate, I cannot conceive, that what is ſophiſtical in the rude ſtate ſhould change its nature, and become juſt reaſoning, when man is more improved. What is a ſophiſm, will always be ſo; nor can any change in the ſtate of the perſon who judges, make that to be juſt reaſoning which before was ſophiſtical. Mr HUME's argument requires, that to man in his rude ſtate, the motives to juſtice and honeſty ſhould not only appear to be ſophiſtical, but ſhould really be ſo. If the motives

tives were juſt in themſelves, then juſtice would be a natural virtue, although the rude man, by an error of his judgment, thought otherwiſe. But if juſtice be not a natural virtue, which is the point Mr HUME intends to prove, then every argument, by which man in his natural ſtate may be urged to it, muſt be a ſophiſm in reality, and not in appearance only; and the effect of diſcipline and education in the civilized ſtate can only be to make thoſe motives to juſtice appear juſt and ſatisfactory, which, in their own nature, are ſophiſtical.

2. It were to be wiſhed, that this ingenious Author had ſhewn us, why that ſtate of man, in which the obligation to honeſty, and an abhorrence of villany, appear perfectly unintelligible and ſophiſtical, ſhould be his *more natural ſtate.*

It is the nature of human ſociety to be progreſſive, as much as it is the nature of the individual. In the individual, the ſtate of infancy leads to that of childhood, childhood to youth, youth to manhood, and manhood to old age. If one ſhould ſay, that the ſtate of infancy is a more natural ſtate than that of manhood or of old age, I am apt to think, that this would be words without any meaning. In like manner, in human ſociety, there is a natural progreſs from rudeneſs to civilization, from ignorance to knowledge. What period of this progreſs ſhall we call man's natural ſtate? To me they appear all equally natural. Every ſtate of ſociety is equally

ly natural, wherein men have acceſs to exert their natural powers about their proper objects, and to improve thoſe powers by the means which their ſituation affords.

Mr HUME, indeed, ſhews ſome timidity in affirming the rude ſtate to be the more natural ſtate of man; and, therefore, adds this qualifying parentheſis, *If you are pleaſed to call ſuch a condition natural.*

But it ought to be obſerved, That if the premiſes of his argument be weakened by this clauſe, the ſame weakneſs muſt be communicated to the concluſion; and the concluſion, according to the rules of good reaſoning, ought to be, That juſtice is an artificial virtue, if you be pleaſed to call it artificial.

3. It were likewiſe to be wiſhed, that Mr HUME had ſhewn from fact, that there ever did exiſt ſuch a ſtate of man as that which he calls his more natural ſtate. It is a ſtate wherein a man borrows a ſum of money, on the condition that he is to reſtore it in a few days; yet when the time of payment comes, his obligation to repay what he borrowed is perfectly unintelligible and ſophiſtical. It would have been proper to have given at leaſt a ſingle inſtance of ſome tribe of the human race that was found to be in this natural ſtate. If no ſuch inſtance can be given, it is probably a ſtate merely imaginary; like that ſtate, which ſome have imagined, wherein

wherein men were *Ouran Outangs*, or wherein they were fiſhes with tails.

Indeed, ſuch a ſtate ſeems impoſſible. That a man ſhould lend without any conception of his having a right to be repaid; or that a man ſhould borrow on the condition of paying in a few days, and yet have no conception of his obligation, ſeems to me to involve a contradiction.

I grant, that a humane man may lend without any expectation of being repaid; but that he ſhould lend without any conception of a right to be repaid, is a contradiction. In like manner, a fraudulent man may borrow without an intention of paying back; but that he ſhould borrow, while an obligation to repay is perfectly unintelligible to him, this is a contradiction.

The ſame author, in his Enquiry into the Principles of Morals, ſect. 3. treating of the ſame ſubject, has the following note:

" 'Tis evident, that the will or conſent alone " never transfers property, nor cauſes the obli- " gation of a promiſe, (for the ſame reaſoning " extends to both) but the will muſt be ex- " preſſed by words or ſigns, in order to impoſe a " tie upon any man. The expreſſion being " once brought in as ſubſervient to the will, " ſoon becomes the principal part of the pro- " miſe; nor will a man be leſs bound by his " word, though he ſecretly give a different di- " rection to his intention, and with-hold the " aſſent of his mind. But though the expreſſion " makes,

" makes, on moſt occaſions, the whole of the " promiſe; yet it does not always ſo; and one " who ſhould make uſe of any expreſſion, of " which he knows not the meaning, and which " he uſes without any ſenſe of the conſequences, " would not certainly be bound by it. Nay, " though he know its meaning; yet if he uſes " it in jeſt only, and with ſuch ſigns as ſhew " evidently he has no ſerious intention of bind- " ing himſelf, he would not be under any obli- " gation of performance; but it is neceſſary " that the words be a perfect expreſſion of the " will, without any contrary ſigns. Nay, even " this we muſt not carry ſo far as to imagine, " that one whom, from our quickneſs of under- " ſtanding, we conjecture to have an intention " of deceiving us, is not bound by his expreſſion " or verbal promiſe, if we accept of it, but muſt " limit this concluſion to thoſe caſes, where the " ſigns are of a different nature from thoſe of " deceit. All theſe contradictions are eaſily ac- " counted for, if juſtice ariſes entirely from its " uſefulneſs to ſociety, but will never be ex- " plained on any other hypotheſis."

Here we have the opinion of this grave moraliſt and acute metaphyſician, that the principles of honeſty and fidelity are at bottom a bundle of contradictions. This is one part of his moral ſyſtem which, I cannot help thinking, borders upon licentiouſneſs. It ſurely tends to give a very unfavourable notion of that cardinal virtue,

virtue, without which no man has a title to be called an honeſt man. What regard can a man pay to the virtue of fidelity, who believes that its eſſential rules contradict each other? Can a man be bound by contradictory rules of conduct? No more, ſurely, than he can be bound to believe contradictory principles.

He tells us, "That all theſe contradictions "are eaſily accounted for, if juſtice ariſes en- "tirely from its uſefulneſs to ſociety, but will "never be explained upon any other hypothe- "ſis."

I know not indeed what is meant by accounting for contradictions, or explaining them. I apprehend, that no hypotheſis can make that which is a contradiction to be no contradiction. However, without attempting to account for theſe contradictions upon his own hypotheſis, he pronounces, in a deciſive tone, that they will never be explained upon any other hypotheſis.

What if it ſhall appear, that the contradictions mentioned in this paragraph, do all take their riſe from two capital miſtakes the author has made with regard to the nature of promiſes and contracts; and if, when theſe are corrected, there ſhall not appear a ſhadow of contradiction in the caſes put by him?

The firſt miſtake is, That a promiſe is ſome kind of will, conſent or intention, which may be expreſſed, or may not be expreſſed. This is to miſtake the nature of a promiſe: For no will,

no

no conſent or intention that is not expreſſed, is a promiſe. A promiſe, being a ſocial tranſaction between two parties, without being expreſſed can have no exiſtence.

Another capital miſtake that runs through the paſſage cited is, That this will, conſent or intention, which makes a promiſe, is a will or intention to perform what we promiſe. Every man knows that there may be a fraudulent promiſe, made without intention of performing. But the intention to perform the promiſe, or not to perform it, whether the intention be known to the other party or not, makes no part of the promiſe, it is a ſolitary act of the mind, and can neither conſtitute nor diſſolve an obligation. What makes a promiſe is, that it be expreſſed to the other party with underſtanding, and with an intention to become bound, and that it be accepted by him.

Carrying theſe remarks along with us, let us review the paſſage cited.

Firſt, He obſerves, that the will or conſent alone does not cauſe the obligation of a promiſe, but it muſt be expreſſed.

I anſwer: The will not expreſſed is not a promiſe; and is it a contradiction that that which is not a promiſe ſhould not cauſe the obligation of a promiſe? He goes on: The expreſſion being once brought in as ſubſervient to the will, ſoon *becomes* a principal part of the promiſe. Here it is ſuppoſed, that the expreſſion

was not originally a conſtituent part of the promiſe, but it ſoon *becomes* ſuch. It is brought in to aid and be ſubſervient to the promiſe which was made before by the will. If Mr HUME had conſidered, that it is the expreſſion accompanied with underſtanding and will to become bound, that conſtitutes a promiſe, he would never have ſaid, that the expreſſion ſoon becomes a part, and is brought in as ſubſervient.

He adds, Nor will a man be leſs bound by his word, though he ſecretly gives a different direction to his intention, and with-holds the aſſent of his mind.

The caſe here put needs ſome explication. Either it means, that the man knowingly and voluntarily gives his word, without any intention of giving his word, or that he gives it without the intention of keeping it, and performing what he promiſes. The laſt of theſe is indeed a poſſible caſe, and is, I apprehend, what Mr HUME means. But the intention of keeping his promiſe is no part of the promiſe, nor does it in the leaſt affect the obligation of it, as we have often obſerved.

If the Author meant that the man may knowingly and voluntarily give his word, without the intention of giving his word, this is impoſſible: For ſuch is the nature of all ſocial acts of the mind, that, as they cannot be without being expreſſed, ſo they cannot be expreſſed knowingly and willingly, but they muſt be. If a man puts

a

a queſtion knowingly and willingly, it is impoſſible that he ſhould at the ſame time will not to put it. If he gives a command knowingly and willingly, it is impoſſible that he ſhould at the ſame time will not to give it. We cannot have contrary wills at the ſame time. And, in like manner, if a man knowingly and willingly becomes bound by a promiſe, it is impoſſible that he ſhould at the ſame time will not to be bound.

To ſuppoſe, therefore, that when a man knowingly and willingly gives his word, he with-holds that will and intention which makes a promiſe, is indeed a contradiction; but the contradiction is not in the nature of the promiſe, but in the caſe ſuppoſed by Mr HUME.

He adds, though the expreſſion, for the moſt part, makes the whole of the promiſe, it does not always ſo.

I anſwer, That the expreſſion, if it is not accompanied with underſtanding, and will to engage, never makes a promiſe. The Author here aſſumes a poſtulate, which nobody ever granted, and which can only be grounded on the impoſſible ſuppoſition made in the former ſentence. And as there can be no promiſe without knowledge, and will to engage, is it marvellous that words which are not underſtood, or words ſpoken in jeſt, and without any intention to become bound, ſhould not have the effect of a promiſe?

The laſt caſe put by Mr HUME, is that of a man who promiſes fraudulently with an intention not to perform, and whoſe fraudulent intention is diſcovered by the other party, who, notwithſtanding, accepts the promiſe. He is bound, ſays Mr HUME, by his verbal promiſe. Undoubtedly he is bound, becauſe an intention not to perform the promiſe, whether known to the other party or not, makes no part of the promiſe, nor affects its obligation, as has been repeatedly obſerved.

From what has been ſaid, I think it evident, that to one who attends to the nature of a promiſe or contract, there is not the leaſt appearance of contradiction in the principles of morality relating to contracts.

It would indeed appear wonderful, that ſuch a man as Mr HUME ſhould have impoſed upon himſelf in ſo plain a matter, if we did not ſee frequent inſtances of ingenious men, whoſe zeal in ſupporting a favourite hypotheſis, darkens their underſtanding, and hinders them from ſeeing what is before their eyes.

CHAP. VII.

That moral Approbation implies a real Judgment.

THE approbation of good actions, and diſapprobation of bad, are ſo familiar to every man come to years of underſtanding, that it

ſeems

ſeems ſtrange there ſhould be any diſpute about their nature.

Whether we reflect upon our own conduct, or attend to the conduct of others with whom we live, or of whom we hear or read, we cannot help approving of ſome things, diſapproving of others, and regarding many with perfect indifference.

Theſe operations of our minds we are conſcious of every day, and almoſt every hour we live. Men of ripe underſtanding are capable of reflecting upon them, and of attending to what paſſes in their own thoughts on ſuch occaſions; yet, for half a century, it has been a ſerious diſpute among Philoſophers, what this approbation and diſapprobation is, Whether there be a real judgment included in it, which, like all other judgments, muſt be true or falſe; or, Whether it include no more but ſome agreeable or uneaſy feeling, in the perſon who approves or diſapproves.

Mr HUME obſerves very juſtly, that this is a controverſy *ſtarted of late*. Before the modern ſyſtem of ideas and impreſſions was introduced, nothing would have appeared more abſurd than to ſay, That when I condemn a man for what he has done, I paſs no judgment at all about the man, but only expreſs ſome uneaſy feeling in myſelf.

Nor did the new ſyſtem produce this diſcovery at once, but gradually, by ſeveral ſteps, ac-

cording as its conſequences were more accurately traced, and its ſpirit more thoroughly imbibed by ſucceſſive Philoſophers.

DES CARTES and Mr LOCKE went no farther than to maintain, that the ſecondary qualities of body, heat and cold, ſound, colour, taſte and ſmell, which we perceive and judge to be in the external object, are mere feelings or ſenſations in our minds, there being nothing in bodies themſelves to which theſe names can be applied; and that the office of the external ſenſes is not to judge of external things, but only to give us ideas or ſenſations, from which we are by reaſoning to deduce the exiſtence of a material world without us, as well as we can.

ARTHUR COLLIER and Biſhop BERKELEY diſcovered, from the ſame principles, that the primary, as well as the ſecondary, qualities of bodies, ſuch as extenſion, figure, ſolidity, motion, are only ſenſations in our minds; and therefore, that there is no material world without us at all.

The ſame philoſophy, when it came to be applied to matters of taſte, diſcovered that beauty and deformity are not any thing in the objects, to which men, from the beginning of the world, aſcribed them, but certain feelings in the mind of the ſpectator.

The next ſtep was an eaſy conſequence from all the preceding, that moral approbation and diſapprobation are not judgments, which muſt be

be true or falſe, but barely, agreeable and uneaſy feelings or ſenſations.

Mr HUME made the laſt ſtep in this progreſs, and crowned the ſyſtem by what he calls his *hypotheſis*, to wit, That belief is more properly an act of the ſenſitive, than of the cogitative part of our nature.

Beyond this I think no man can go in this track; ſenſation or feeling is all, and what is left to the cogitative part of our nature, I am not able to comprehend.

I have had occaſion to conſider each of theſe paradoxes, excepting that which relates to morals, in *Eſſays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*; and, though they be ſtrictly connected with each other, and with the ſyſtem which has produced them, I have attempted to ſhew, that they are inconſiſtent with juſt notions of our intellectual powers, no leſs than they are with the common ſenſe and common language of mankind. And this, I think, will likewiſe appear with regard to the concluſion relating to morals, to wit, That moral approbation is only an agreeable feeling, and not a real judgment.

To prevent ambiguity as much as poſſible, let us attend to the meaning of *feeling* and of *judgment*. Theſe operations of the mind, perhaps, cannot be logically defined; but they are well underſtood, and eaſily diſtinguiſhed, by their properties and adjuncts.

Feeling, or ſenſation, ſeems to be the loweſt degree of animation we can conceive. We give the name of *animal* to every being that feels pain or pleaſure; and this ſeems to be the boundary between the inanimate and animal creation.

We know no being of ſo low a rank in the creation of GOD, as to poſſeſs this animal power only without any other.

We commonly diſtinguiſh *feeling* from *thinking*, becauſe it hardly deſerves the name; and though it be, in a more general ſenſe, a ſpecies of thought, is leaſt removed from the paſſive and inert ſtate of things inanimate.

A feeling muſt be agreeable, or uneaſy, or indifferent. It may be weak or ſtrong. It is expreſſed in language either by a ſingle word, or by ſuch a contexture of words as may be the ſubject or predicate of a propoſition, but ſuch as cannot by themſelves make a propoſition. For it implies neither affirmation nor negation; and therefore cannot have the qualities of true or falſe, which diſtinguiſh propoſitions from all other forms of ſpeech, and judgments from all other acts of the mind.

That I have ſuch a feeling, is indeed an affirmative propoſition, and expreſſes teſtimony grounded upon an intuitive judgment. But the feeling is only one term of this propoſition; and it can only make a propoſition when joined with another term, by a verb affirming or denying.

As

As feeling diſtinguiſhes the animal nature from the inanimate; ſo judging ſeems to diſtinguiſh the rational nature from the merely animal.

Though judgment in general is expreſſed by one word in language, as the moſt complex operations of the mind may be; yet a particular judgment can only be expreſſed by a ſentence, and by that kind of ſentence which Logicians call a *propoſition*, in which there muſt neceſſarily be a verb in the indicative mood, either expreſſed or underſtood.

Every judgment muſt neceſſarily be true or falſe, and the ſame may be ſaid of the propoſition which expreſſes it. It is a determination of the underſtanding, with regard to what is true, or falſe, or dubious.

In judgment, we can diſtinguiſh the object about which we judge, from the act of the mind in judging of that object. In mere feeling there is no ſuch diſtinction. The object of judgment muſt be expreſſed by a propoſition; and belief, diſbelief or doubt, always accompanies the judgment we form. If we judge the propoſition to be true, we muſt believe it; if we judge it to be falſe, we muſt diſbelieve it; and if we be uncertain whether it be true or falſe, we muſt doubt.

The *toothach*, the *headach*, are words which expreſs uneaſy feelings; but to ſay that they expreſs a judgment would be ridiculous.

That

That the ſun is greater than the earth, is a propoſition, and therefore the object of judgment; and when affirmed or denied, believed or diſbelieved, or doubted, it expreſſes judgment; but to ſay that it expreſſes only a feeling in the mind of him that believes it, would be ridiculous.

Theſe two operations of mind, when we conſider them ſeparately, are very different, and eaſily diſtinguiſhed. When we feel without judging, or judge without feeling, it is impoſſible, without very groſs inattention, to miſtake the one for the other.

But in many operations of the mind, both are inſeparably conjoined under one name; and when we are not aware that the operation is complex, we may take one ingredient to be the whole, and overlook the other.

In former ages, that moral power, by which human actions ought to be regulated, was called *reaſon*, and conſidered both by Philoſophers, and by the vulgar, as the power of judging what we ought, and what we ought not to do.

This is very fully expreſſed by Mr HUME, in his Treatiſe of Human Nature, Book II. Part III. § 3. "Nothing is more uſual in philoſophy, "and even in common life, than to talk of the "combat of paſſion and reaſon, to give the pre-"ference to reaſon, and aſſert that men are on-"ly ſo far virtuous as they conform themſelves "to its dictates. Every rational creature, 'tis "ſaid, is obliged to regulate his actions by rea-

"ſon;

" ſon; and if any other motive or principle
" challenge the direction of his conduct, he
" ought to oppoſe it, till it be entirely ſubdued,
" or, at leaſt, brought to a conformity to that
" ſuperior principle. On this method of think-
" ing, the greateſt part of moral philoſophy, an-
" cient and modern, ſeems to be founded."

That thoſe Philoſophers attended chiefly to the judging power of our moral faculty, appears from the names they gave to its operations, and from the whole of their language concerning it.

The modern philoſophy has led men to attend chiefly to their ſenſations and feelings, and thereby to reſolve into mere feeling, complex acts of the mind, of which feeling is only one ingredient.

I had occaſion, in the preceding Eſſays, to obſerve, That ſeveral operations of the mind, to which we give one name, and conſider as one act, are compounded of more ſimple acts, inſeparably united in our conſtitution, and that in theſe, ſenſation or feeling often makes one ingredient.

Thus the appetites of hunger and thirſt are compounded of an uneaſy ſenſation, and the deſire of food or drink. In our benevolent affections, there is both an agreeable feeling, and a deſire of happineſs to the object of our affection; and malevolent affections have ingredients of a contrary nature.

In

In theſe inſtances, ſenſation or feeling is inſeparably conjoined with deſire. In other inſtances, we find ſenſation inſeparably conjoined with judgment or belief, and that in two different ways. In ſome inſtances, the judgment or belief ſeems to be the conſequence of the ſenſation, and to be regulated by it. In other inſtances, the ſenſation is the conſequence of the judgment.

When we perceive an external object by our ſenſes, we have a ſenſation conjoined with a firm belief of the exiſtence and ſenſible qualities of the external object. Nor has all the ſubtilty of metaphyſics been able to diſjoin what nature has conjoined in our conſtitution. DES CARTES and LOCKE endeavoured, by reaſoning, to deduce the exiſtence of external objects from our ſenſations, but in vain. Subſequent Philoſophers, finding no reaſon for this connection, endeavoured to throw off the belief of external objects as being unreaſonable; but this attempt is no leſs vain. Nature has doomed us to believe the teſtimony of our ſenſes, whether we can give a good reaſon for doing ſo or not.

In this inſtance, the belief or judgment is the conſequence of the ſenſation, as the ſenſation is the conſequence of the impreſſion made on the organ of ſenſe.

But in moſt of the operations of mind in which judgment or belief is combined with feeling.

ing, the feeling is the conſequence of the judgment, and is regulated by it.

Thus, an account of the good conduct of a friend at a diſtance gives me a very agreeable feeling, and a contrary account would give me a very uneaſy feeling; but theſe feelings depend entirely upon my belief of the report.

In hope, there is an agreeable feeling, depending upon the belief or expectation of good to come: Fear is made up of contrary ingredients; in both, the feeling is regulated by the degree of belief.

In the reſpect we bear to the worthy, and in our contempt of the worthleſs, there is both judgment and feeling, and the laſt depends entirely upon the firſt.

The ſame may be ſaid of gratitude for good offices, and reſentment of injuries.

Let me now conſider how I am affected when I ſee a man exerting himſelf nobly in a good cauſe. I am conſcious that the effect of his conduct on my mind is complex, though it may be called by one name. I look up to his virtue, I approve, I admire it. In doing ſo, I have pleaſure indeed, or an agreeable feeling; this is granted. But I find myſelf intereſted in his ſucceſs and in his fame. This is affection; it is love and eſteem, which is more than mere feeling. The man is the object of this eſteem; but in mere feeling there is no object.

I am likewiſe conſcious, that this agreeable feeling in me, and this eſteem of him, depend entirely upon the judgment I form of his conduct. I judge that this conduct merits eſteem; and, while I thus judge, I cannot but eſteem him, and contemplate his conduct with pleaſure. Perſuade me that he was bribed, or that he acted from ſome mercenary or bad motive, immediately my eſteem and my agreeable feeling vaniſh.

In the approbation of a good action, therefore, there is feeling indeed, but there is alſo eſteem of the agent; and both the feeling and the eſteem depend upon the judgment we form of his conduct.

When I exerciſe my moral faculty about my own actions or thoſe of other men, I am conſcious that I judge as well as feel. I accuſe and excuſe, I acquit and condemn, I aſſent and diſſent, I believe and diſbelieve, and doubt. Theſe are acts of judgment, and not feelings.

Every determination of the underſtanding, with regard to what is true or falſe, is judgment. That I ought not to ſteal, or to kill, or to bear falſe witneſs, are propoſitions, of the truth of which I am as well convinced as of any propoſition in EUCLID. I am conſcious that I judge them to be true propoſitions; and my conſciouſneſs makes all other arguments unneceſſary, with regard to the operations of my own mind.

That

That other men judge, as well as feel, in ſuch caſes, I am convinced, becauſe they underſtand me when I expreſs my moral judgment, and expreſs theirs by the ſame terms and phraſes.

Suppoſe that, in a caſe well known to both, my friend ſays, *Such a man did well and worthily; his conduct is highly approvable.* This ſpeech, according to all rules of interpretation, expreſſes my friend's judgment of the man's conduct. This judgment may be true or falſe, and I may agree in opinion with him, or I may diſſent from him without offence, as we may differ in other matters of judgment.

Suppoſe, again, that, in relation to the ſame caſe, my friend ſays, *The man's conduct gave me a very agreeable feeling.*

This ſpeech, if approbation be nothing but an agreeable feeling, muſt have the very ſame meaning with the firſt, and expreſs neither more nor leſs. But this cannot be, for two reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe there is no rule in grammar or rhetoric, nor any uſage in language, by which theſe two ſpeeches can be conſtrued, ſo as to have the ſame meaning. The *firſt* expreſſes plainly an opinion or judgment of the conduct of the man, but ſays nothing of the ſpeaker. The *ſecond* only teſtifies a fact concerning the ſpeaker, to wit, that he had ſuch a feeling.

Another reaſon why theſe two ſpeeches cannot mean the ſame thing is, that the firſt may be contradicted without any ground of offence, ſuch

ſuch contradiction being only a difference of opinion, which, to a reaſonable man, gives no offence. But the ſecond ſpeech cannot be contradicted without an affront; for, as every man muſt know his own feelings, to deny that a man had a feeling which he affirms he had, is to charge him with falſehood.

If moral approbation be a real judgment, which produces an agreeable feeling in the mind of him who judges, both ſpeeches are perfectly intelligible, in the moſt obvious and literal ſenſe. Their meaning is different, but they are related, ſo that the one may be inferred from the other, as we infer the effect from the cauſe, or the cauſe from the effect. I know, that what a man judges to be a very worthy action, he contemplates with pleaſure; and what he contemplates with pleaſure muſt, in his judgment, have worth. But the judgment and the feeling are different acts of his mind, though connected as cauſe and effect. He can expreſs either the one or the other with perfect propriety; but the ſpeech which expreſſes his feeling is altogether improper and inept to expreſs his judgment, for this evident reaſon, that judgment and feeling, though in ſome caſes connected, are things in their nature different.

If we ſuppoſe, on the other hand, that moral approbation is nothing more than an agreeable feeling, occaſioned by the contemplation of an action, the ſecond ſpeech above mentioned has

a diſtinct meaning, and expreſſes all that is meant by moral approbation. But the firſt ſpeech either means the very ſame thing, (which cannot be, for the reaſons already mentioned) or it has no meaning.

Now, we may appeal to the Reader, whether, in converſation upon human characters, ſuch ſpeeches as the firſt are not as frequent, as familiar, and as well underſtood, as any thing in language; and whether they have not been common in all ages that we can trace, and in all languages?

This doctrine, therefore, That moral approbation is merely a feeling without judgment, neceſſarily carries along with it this conſequence, that a form of ſpeech, upon one of the moſt common topics of diſcourſe, which either has no meaning, or a meaning irreconcilable to all rules of grammar or rhetoric, is found to be common and familiar in all languages, and in all ages of the world, while every man knows how to expreſs the meaning, if it have any, in plain and proper language.

Such a conſequence I think ſufficient to ſink any philoſophical opinion on which it hangs.

A particular language may have ſome oddity, or even abſurdity, introduced by ſome man of eminence, from caprice or wrong judgment, and followed, by ſervile imitators, for a time, till it be detected, and, of conſequence, diſcountenanced and dropt; but that the ſame ab-

ſurdity ſhould pervade all languages, through all ages, and that, after being detected and expoſed, it ſhould ſtill keep its countenance and its place in language as much as before, this can never be while men have underſtanding.

It may be obſerved by the way, that the ſame argument may be applied, with equal force, againſt thoſe other paradoxical opinions of modern philoſophy, which we before mentioned as connected with this, ſuch as, that beauty and deformity are not at all in the objects to which language univerſally aſcribes them, but are merely feelings in the mind of the ſpectator; that the ſecondary qualities are not in external objects, but are merely feelings or ſenſations in him that perceives them; and, in general, that our external and internal ſenſes are faculties by which we have ſenſations or feelings only, but by which we do not judge.

That every form of ſpeech, which language affords to expreſs our judgments, ſhould, in all ages, and in all languages, be uſed to expreſs what is no judgment; and that feelings, which are eaſily expreſſed in proper language, ſhould as univerſally be expreſſed by language altogether improper and abſurd, I cannot believe; and therefore muſt conclude, that if language be the expreſſion of thought, men *judge* of the primary and ſecondary qualities of body by their external ſenſes, of beauty and deformity by their taſte,

taſte, and of virtue and vice by their moral faculty.

A truth ſo evident as this is, can hardly be obſcured and brought into doubt, but by the abuſe of words. And much abuſe of words there has been upon this ſubject. To avoid this, as much as poſſible, I have uſed the word *judgment*, on one ſide, and *ſenſation* or *feeling*, upon the other; becauſe theſe words have been leaſt liable to abuſe or ambiguity. But it may be proper to make ſome obſervations upon other words that have been uſed in this controverſy.

Mr HUME, in his Treatiſe of Human Nature, has employed two ſections upon it, the titles of which are, *Moral Diſtinctions not derived from Reaſon*, and *Moral Diſtinctions derived from a Moral Senſe*.

When he is not, by cuſtom, led unawares to ſpeak of reaſon like other men, he limits that word to ſignify only the power of judging in matters merely ſpeculative. Hence he concludes, "That reaſon of itſelf is inactive and "perfectly inert." That "actions may be laudable or blameable, but cannot be reaſonable "or unreaſonable." That "it is not contrary "to reaſon to prefer the deſtruction of the "whole world to the ſcratching of my finger." That "it is not contrary to reaſon, for me to "chooſe my total ruin to prevent the leaſt uneaſineſs of an Indian, or of a perſon wholly "unknown to me." That "reaſon is, and

"ought only to be, the ſlave of the paſſions, and "can never pretend to any other office, than to "ſerve and obey them."

If we take the word *reaſon* to mean what common uſe, both of Philoſophers, and of the vulgar, hath made it to mean, theſe maxims are not only falſe, but licentious. It is only his abuſe of the words *reaſon* and *paſſion*, that can juſtify them from this cenſure.

The meaning of a common word is not to be aſcertained by philoſophical theory, but by common uſage; and if a man will take the liberty of limiting or extending the meaning of common words at his pleaſure, he may, like MANDEVILLE, inſinuate the moſt licentious paradoxes with the appearance of plauſibility. I have before made ſome obſervations upon the meaning of this word, Eſſay II. chap. 2. and Eſſay III. part 3. chap. 1. to which the Reader is referred.

When Mr HUME derives moral diſtinctions from a moral ſenſe, I agree with him in words, but we differ about the meaning of the word *ſenſe*. Every power to which the name of a ſenſe has been given, is a power of judging of the objects of that ſenſe, and has been accounted ſuch in all ages; the moral ſenſe therefore is the power of judging in morals. But Mr HUME will have the moral ſenſe to be only a power of feeling, without judging: This I take to be an abuſe of a word.

Authors

Authors who place moral approbation in feeling only, very often uſe the word *ſentiment*, to expreſs feeling without judgment. This I take likewiſe to be an abuſe of a word. Our moral determinations may, with propriety, be called *moral ſentiments*. For the word *ſentiment*, in the Engliſh language, never, as I conceive, ſignifies mere feeling, but judgment accompanied with feeling. It was wont to ſignify opinion or judgment of any kind, but, of late, is appropriated to ſignify an opinion or judgment, that ſtrikes, and produces ſome agreeable or uneaſy emotion. So we ſpeak of ſentiments of reſpect, of eſteem, of gratitude. But I never heard the pain of the gout, or any other mere feeling, called a ſentiment.

Even the word *judgment* has been uſed by Mr HUME to expreſs what he maintains to be only a feeling. Treatiſe of Human Nature, part 3. page 3. "The term *perception* is no leſs appli-"cable to thoſe *judgments* by which we diſtin-"guiſh moral good and evil, than to every other "operation of the mind." Perhaps he uſed this word inadvertently; for I think there cannot be a greater abuſe of words, than to put judgment for what he held to be mere feeling.

All the words moſt commonly uſed, both by Philoſophers and by the vulgar, to expreſs the operations of our moral faculty, ſuch as *deciſion*, *determination*, *ſentence*, *approbation*, *diſapproba-*

tion, applauſe, cenſure, praiſe, blame, neceſſarily imply judgment in their meaning. When, therefore, they are uſed by Mr HUME, and others who hold his opinion, to ſignify feelings only, this is an abuſe of words. If theſe Philoſophers wiſh to ſpeak plainly and properly, they muſt, in diſcourſing of morals, diſcard theſe words altogether, becauſe their eſtabliſhed ſignification in the language, is contrary to what they would expreſs by them.

They muſt likewiſe diſcard from morals the words *ought* and *ought not*, which very properly expreſs judgment, but cannot be applied to mere feelings. Upon theſe words Mr HUME has made a particular obſervation in the concluſion of his firſt ſection above mentioned. I ſhall give it in his own words, and make ſome remarks upon it.

"I cannot forbear adding to theſe reaſonings, "an obſervation which may, perhaps, be found "of ſome importance. In every ſyſtem of mo- "rality which I have hitherto met with, I have "always remarked, that the Author proceeds "for ſome time in the ordinary way of reaſon- "ing, and eſtabliſhes the being of a GOD, or "makes obſervations concerning human affairs; "when, of a ſudden, I am ſurpriſed to find, that, "inſtead of the uſual copulations of propoſi- "tions, *is*, and *is not*, I meet with no propoſi- "tion that is not connected with an *ought*, or "an *ought not*. This change is imperceptible,

"but

" but is, however, of the laſt conſequence. For " as this *ought* or *ought not* expreſſes ſome new " relation or affirmation, 'tis neceſſary that it " ſhould be obſerved and explained; and, at " the ſame time, that a reaſon ſhould be given " for what ſeems altogether inconceivable; how " this new relation can be a deduction from " others which are entirely different from it. " But as Authors do not commonly uſe this " precaution, I ſhall preſume to recommend it " to the Readers; and am perſuaded, that this " ſmall attention would ſubvert all the vulgar " ſyſtems of morality, and let us ſee, that the " diſtinction of vice and virtue, is not founded " merely on the relations of objects, nor is per- " ceived by reaſon."

We may here obſerve, that it is acknowledged, that the words *ought* and *ought not* expreſs ſome relation or affirmation; but a relation or affirmation which Mr HUME thought inexplicable, or, at leaſt, inconſiſtent with his ſyſtem of morals. He muſt, therefore, have thought, that they ought not to be uſed in treating of that ſubject.

He likewiſe makes two demands, and, taking it for granted that they cannot be ſatisfied, is perſuaded, that an attention to this is ſufficient to ſubvert all the vulgar ſyſtems of morals.

The *firſt* demand is, that *ought* and *ought not* be explained

To a man that underſtands Engliſh, there are ſurely no words that require explanation leſs. Are not all men taught, from their early years, that they ought not to lie, nor ſteal, nor ſwear falſely? But Mr HUME thinks, that men never underſtood what theſe precepts mean, or rather that they are unintelligible. If this be ſo, I think indeed it will follow, that all the vulgar ſyſtems of morals are ſubverted.

Dr JOHNSON, in his Dictionary, explains the word *ought* to ſignify, being obliged by duty; and I know no better explication that can be given of it. The reader will ſee what I thought neceſſary to ſay concerning the moral relation expreſſed by this word, in Eſſay III. part 3. chap. 5.

The *ſecond* demand is, That a reaſon ſhould be given why this relation ſhould be a deduction from others which are entirely different from it.

This is to demand a reaſon for what does not exiſt. The firſt principles of morals are not deductions. They are ſelf-evident; and their truth, like that of other axioms, is perceived without reaſoning or deduction. And moral truths, that are not ſelf-evident, are deduced, not from relations quite different from them, but from the firſt principles of morals.

In a matter ſo intereſting to mankind, and ſo frequently the ſubject of converſation among the learned and the unlearned as morals is, it may ſurely

ſurely be expected, that men will expreſs both their judgments and their feelings with propriety, and conſiſtently with the rules of language. An opinion, therefore, which makes the language of all ages and nations, upon this ſubject, to be improper, contrary to all rules of language, and fit to be diſcarded, needs no other refutation.

As mankind have, in all ages, underſtood *reaſon* to mean the power by which not only our ſpeculative opinions, but our actions ought to be regulated, we may ſay, with perfect propriety, that all vice is contrary to reaſon; that, by reaſon, we are to judge of what we ought to do, as well as of what we ought to believe.

But though all vice be contrary to reaſon, I conceive that it would not be a proper definition of vice to ſay, that it is a conduct contrary to reaſon, becauſe this definition would apply equally to folly, which all men diſtinguiſh from vice.

There are other phraſes which have been uſed on the ſame ſide of the queſtion, which I ſee no reaſon for adopting, ſuch as, *acting contrary to the relations of things*, contrary *to the reaſon of things, to the fitneſs of things, to the truth of things, to abſolute fitneſs.* Theſe phraſes have not the authority of common uſe, which, in matters of language, is great. They ſeem to have been invented by ſome authors, with a view to explain the nature of vice; but I do not think they anſwer

ſwer that end. If intended as definitions of vice, they are improper; becauſe, in the moſt favourable ſenſe they can bear, they extend to every kind of fooliſh and abſurd conduct, as well as to that which is vicious.

I ſhall conclude this chapter with ſome obſervations upon the five arguments which Mr HUME has offered upon this point in his Enquiry.

The *firſt* is, That it is impoſſible that the hypotheſis he oppoſes can, in any particular inſtance, be ſo much as rendered intelligible, whatever ſpecious figure it may make in general diſcourſe. "Examine," ſays he, "the crime of "*ingratitude*, anatomize all its circumſtances, "and examine, by your reaſon alone, in what "conſiſts the demerit or blame, you will never "come to any iſſue or concluſion."

I think it unneceſſary to follow him through all the accounts of ingratitude which he conceives may be given by thoſe whom he oppoſes, becauſe I agree with him in that which he himſelf adopts, to wit, "That this crime ariſes from "a complication of circumſtances, which, being "preſented to the ſpectator, excites the ſenti-"ment of blame by the particular ſtructure and "fabric of his mind."

This he thought a true and intelligible account of the criminality of ingratitude. So do I. And therefore I think the hypotheſis he oppoſes is intelligible, when applied to a particular inſtance.

Mr

ſurely be expected, that men will expreſs both their judgments and their feelings with propriety, and conſiſtently with the rules of language. An opinion, therefore, which makes the language of all ages and nations, upon this ſubject, to be improper, contrary to all rules of language, and fit to be diſcarded, needs no other refutation.

As mankind have, in all ages, underſtood *reaſon* to mean the power by which not only our ſpeculative opinions, but our actions ought to be regulated, we may ſay, with perfect propriety, that all vice is contrary to reaſon; that, by reaſon, we are to judge of what we ought to do, as well as of what we ought to believe.

But though all vice be contrary to reaſon, I conceive that it would not be a proper definition of vice to ſay, that it is a conduct contrary to reaſon, becauſe this definition would apply equally to folly, which all men diſtinguiſh from vice.

There are other phraſes which have been uſed on the ſame ſide of the queſtion, which I ſee no reaſon for adopting, ſuch as, *acting contrary to the relations of things*, contrary *to the reaſon of things, to the fitneſs of things, to the truth of things, to abſolute fitneſs.* Theſe phraſes have not the authority of common uſe, which, in matters of language, is great. They ſeem to have been invented by ſome authors, with a view to explain the nature of vice; but I do not think they anſwer

poſe a being without any moral faculty in his fabric, I grant that he could not have the ſentiments of blame and moral approbation.

There are, therefore, judgments, as well as feelings, that are excited by the particular ſtructure and fabric of the mind. But there is this remarkable difference between them, That every judgment is, in its own nature, true or falſe; and though it depends upon the fabric of a mind, whether it have ſuch a judgment or not, it depends not upon that fabric whether the judgment be true or not. A true judgment will be true, whatever be the fabric of the mind; but a particular ſtructure and fabric is neceſſary, in order to our perceiving that truth. Nothing like this can be ſaid of mere feelings, becauſe the attributes of true or falſe do not belong to them.

Thus I think it appears, that the hypotheſis which Mr HUME oppoſes is not unintelligible, when applied to the particular inſtance of ingratitude; becauſe the account of ingratitude which he himſelf thinks true and intelligible, is perfectly agreeable to it.

The *ſecond* argument amounts to this: That in moral deliberation, we muſt be acquainted before-hand with all the objects and all their relations. After theſe things are known, the underſtanding has no farther room to operate. Nothing remains but to feel, on our part, ſome ſentiment of blame or approbation.

Let

Let us apply this reaſoning to the office of a judge. In a cauſe that comes before him, he muſt be made acquainted with all the objects, and all their relations. After this, his underſtanding has no farther room to operate. Nothing remains, on his part, but to feel the right or the wrong; and mankind have, very abſurdly, called him a *judge*; he ought to be called a *feeler*.

To anſwer this argument more directly: The man who deliberates, after all the objects and relations mentioned by Mr HUME are known to him, has a point to determine; and that is, whether the action under his deliberation ought to be done or ought not. In moſt caſes, this point will appear ſelf-evident to a man who has been accuſtomed to exerciſe his moral judgment; in ſome caſes it may require reaſoning.

In like manner, the judge, after all the circumſtances of the cauſe are known, has to judge, whether the plaintiff has a juſt plea or not.

The *third* argument is taken from the analogy between moral beauty and natural, between moral ſentiment and taſte. As beauty is not a quality of the object, but a certain feeling of the ſpectator, ſo virtue and vice are not qualities in the perſons to whom language aſcribes them, but feelings of the ſpectator.

But is it certain that beauty is not any quality of the object? This is indeed a paradox of modern philoſophy, built upon a philoſophical theory;

theory; but a paradox ſo contrary to the common language and common ſenſe of mankind, that it ought rather to overturn the theory on which it ſtands, than receive any ſupport from it. And if beauty be really a quality of the object, and not merely a feeling of the ſpectator, the whole force of this argument goes over to the other ſide of the queſtion.

"EUCLID," he ſays, "has fully explained all "the qualities of the circle, but has not, in any "propoſition, ſaid a word of its beauty. The "reaſon is evident. The beauty is not a qua-"lity of the circle."

By the *qualities of the circle*, he muſt mean its properties; and there are here two miſtakes.

Firſt, EUCLID has not fully explained all the properties of the circle. Many have been diſcovered and demonſtrated which he never dreamt of.

Secondly, The reaſon why EUCLID has not ſaid a word of the beauty of the circle, is not, *that beauty is not a quality of the circle*; the reaſon is, that EUCLID never digreſſes from his ſubject. His purpoſe was to demonſtrate the mathematical properties of the circle. Beauty is a quality of the circle, not demonſtrable by mathematical reaſoning, but immediately perceived by a good taſte. To ſpeak of it would have been a digreſſion from his ſubject; and that is a fault he is never guilty of.

The

The *fourth* argument is, That inanimate objects may bear to each other all the ſame relations which we obſerve in moral agents.

If this were true, it would be very much to the purpoſe; but it ſeems to be thrown out raſhly, without any attention to its evidence. Had Mr HUME reflected but a very little upon this dogmatical aſſertion, a thouſand inſtances would have occurred to him in direct contradiction to it.

May not one animal be more tame, or more docile, or more cunning, or more fierce, or more ravenous, than another? Are theſe relations to be found in inanimate objects? May not one man be a better painter, or ſculptor, or ſhipbuilder, or tailor, or ſhoemaker, than another? Are theſe relations to be found in inanimate objects, or even in brute-animals? May not one moral agent be more juſt, more pious, more attentive to any moral duty, or more eminent in any moral virtue, than another? Are not theſe relations peculiar to moral agents? But to come to the relations moſt eſſential to morality.

When I ſay that *I ought to do ſuch an action*, that *it is my duty*, do not theſe words expreſs a relation between me and a certain action in my power; a relation which cannot be between inanimate objects, or between any other objects but a moral agent and his moral actions; a relation which is well underſtood by all men come

to

to years of underſtanding, and expreſſed in all languages?

Again, when in deliberating about two actions in my power, which cannot both be done, I ſay *this* ought to be preferred to the other; that juſtice, for inſtance, ought to be preferred to generoſity; I expreſs a moral relation between two actions of a moral agent, which is well underſtood, and which cannot exiſt between objects of any other kind.

There are, therefore, moral relations which can have no exiſtence but between moral agents and their voluntary actions. To determine theſe relations is the object of morals; and to determine relations, is the province of judgment, and not of mere feeling.

The *laſt* argument is a chain of ſeveral propoſitions, which deſerve diſtinct conſideration. They may, I think, be ſummed up in theſe four: 1. There muſt be ultimate ends of action, beyond which it is abſurd to aſk a reaſon of acting. 2. The ultimate ends of human actions can never be accounted for by reaſon; 3. but recommend themſelves entirely to the ſentiments and affections of mankind, without any dependence on the intellectual faculties. 4. As virtue is an end, and is deſirable on its own account, without fee or reward, merely for the immediate ſatisfaction it conveys; it is requiſite, that there ſhould be ſome ſentiment which it touches, ſome internal taſte or feeling, or whatever you pleaſe to call it,

it, which diſtinguiſhes moral good and evil, and which embraces the one and rejects the other.

To the *firſt* of theſe propoſitions I entirely agree. The ultimate ends of action are what I have called *the principles of action*, which I have endeavoured, in the third Eſſay, to enumerate, and to claſs under three heads of mechanical, animal and rational.

The *ſecond* propoſition needs ſome explication. I take its meaning to be, That there cannot be another end for the ſake of which an ultimate end is purſued: For the reaſon of an action means nothing but the end for which the action is done; and the reaſon of an end of action can mean nothing but another end, for the ſake of which that end is purſued, and to which it is the means.

That this is the author's meaning is evident from his reaſoning in confirmation of it. "Aſk "a man, *why he uſes exerciſe?* he will anſwer, "*becauſe he deſires to keep his health.* If you "then inquire, *why he deſires health?* he will "readily reply, *becauſe ſickneſs is painful.* If "you puſh your inquiries further, and deſire a "reaſon why he hates pain, it is impoſſible he "can ever give any. This is an ultimate end, "and is never referred to any other object." To account by reaſon for an end, therefore, is to ſhow another end, for the ſake of which that end is deſired and purſued. And that, in this ſenſe, an ultimate end can never be accounted

for by reaſon, is certain, becauſe that cannot be an ultimate end which is purſued only for the ſake of another end.

I agree therefore with Mr HUME in this ſecond propoſition, which indeed is implied in the firſt.

The *third* propoſition is, That ultimate ends recommend themſelves entirely to the ſentiments and affections of mankind, without any dependence on the intellectual faculties.

By *ſentiments* he muſt here mean feelings without judgment, and by *affections*, ſuch affections as imply no judgment. For ſurely any operation that implies judgment, cannot be independent of the intellectual faculties.

This being underſtood, I cannot aſſent to this propoſition.

The Author ſeems to think it implied in the preceding, or a neceſſary conſequence from it, that becauſe an ultimate end cannot be accounted for by reaſon; that is, cannot be purſued merely for the ſake of another end; therefore it can have no dependence on the intellectual faculties. I deny this conſequence, and can ſee no force in it.

I think it not only does not follow from the preceding propoſition, but that it is contrary to truth.

A man may act from gratitude as an ultimate end; but gratitude implies a judgment and belief of favours received, and therefore is dependent

ent on the intellectual faculties. A man may act from reſpect to a worthy character as an ultimate end; but this reſpect neceſſarily implies a judgment of worth in the perſon, and therefore is dependent on the intellectual faculties.

I have endeavoured in the third Eſſay before mentioned, to ſhew that, beſide the animal principles of our nature, which require will and intention, but not judgment, there are alſo in human nature rational principles of action, or ultimate ends, which have, in all ages, been called rational, and have a juſt title to that name, not only from the authority of language, but becauſe they can have no exiſtence but in beings endowed with reaſon, and becauſe, in all their exertions, they require not only intention and will, but judgment or reaſon.

Therefore, until it can be proved that an ultimate end cannot be dependent on the intellectual faculties, this third propoſition, and all that hangs upon it, muſt fall to the ground.

The *laſt* propoſition aſſumes, with very good reaſon, That virtue is an ultimate end, and deſirable on its own account. From which, if the third propoſition were true, the concluſion would undoubtedly follow, That virtue has no dependence on the intellectual faculties. But as that propoſition is not granted, nor proved, this concluſion is left without any ſupport from the whole of the argument.

I ſhould not have thought it worth while to inſiſt ſo long upon this controverſy, if I did not conceive that the conſequences which the contrary opinions draw after them are important.

If what we call *moral judgment* be no real judgment, but merely a feeling, it follows, that the principles of morals which we have been taught to conſider as an immutable law to all intelligent beings, have no other foundation but an arbitrary ſtructure and fabric in the conſtitution of the human mind: So that, by a change in our ſtructure, what is immoral might become moral, virtue might be turned into vice, and vice into virtue. And beings of a different ſtructure, according to the variety of their feelings, may have different, nay oppoſite meaſures of moral good and evil.

It follows that, from our notions of morals, we can conclude nothing concerning a moral character in the Deity, which is the foundation of all religion, and the ſtrongeſt ſupport of virtue.

Nay, this opinion ſeems to conclude ſtrongly againſt a moral character in the Deity, ſince nothing arbitrary or mutable can be conceived to enter into the deſcription of a nature eternal, immutable, and neceſſarily exiſtent. Mr HUME ſeems perfectly conſiſtent with himſelf, in allowing of no evidence for the moral attributes of the Supreme Being, whatever there may be for his natural attributes.

On

On the other hand, if moral judgment be a true and real judgment, the principles of morals ſtand upon the immutable foundation of truth, and can undergo no change by any difference of fabric, or ſtructure of thoſe who judge of them. There may be, and there are, beings, who have not the faculty of conceiving moral truths, or perceiving the excellence of moral worth, as there are beings incapable of perceiving mathematical truths; but no defect, no error of underſtanding, can make what is true to be falſe.

If it be true that piety, juſtice, benevolence, wiſdom, temperance, fortitude, are in their own nature the moſt excellent and moſt amiable qualities of a human creature; that vice has an inherent turpitude which merits diſapprobation and diſlike; theſe truths cannot be hid from Him whoſe underſtanding is infinite, whoſe judgment is always according to truth, and who muſt eſteem every thing according to its real value.

The Judge of all the earth, we are ſure, will do right. He has given to men the faculty of perceiving the right and the wrong in conduct, as far as is neceſſary to our preſent ſtate, and of perceiving the dignity of the one, and the demerit of the other; and ſurely there can be no real knowledge or real excellence in man, which is not in his Maker.

We may therefore juſtly conclude, That what we know in part, and ſee in part, of right and wrong,

wrong, He ſees perfectly; that the moral excellence which we ſee and admire in ſome of our fellow creatures, is a faint but true copy of that moral excellence, which is eſſential to His nature; and that to tread the path of virtue, is the true dignity of our nature, an imitation of GOD, and the way to obtain his favour.

Lately Published,

In One Volume Octavo,

AN

INQUIRY

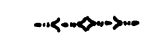
INTO THE

HUMAN MIND,

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMON SENSE.

BY

THOMAS REID, D. D. &c.



FIFTH EDITION.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
GRADUATE LIBRARY

DATE DUE

JUL 17 1978

NOV 0 9 1978

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
3 9015 05986 8003

DO NOT REMOVE
OR
MUTILA

KG